A HISTORY
OF
URDU LITERATURE

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WITH A FOREWORD
BY
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PREFACE

The object of this book is to trace in outline the development of Urdu literature from the earliest time to the present day with biographical sketches of writers and critical appreciations of their works with a description of the more important of them. An effort has been made to bring out the relationship between writer and writer and group and group and to trace the rise, growth and decline of schools and movements. Nor has the historical setting in which the poets and writers lived and worked been ignored. The book is not merely a storehouse of facts but stress has also been laid on ideas and tendencies that dominated the age. My aim has been to supply a text-book on the modern principles criticism and to interpret Urdu literature to English knowing public.

Nobody is more conscious of his deficiencies than the writer. The book was completed about four years ago in the midst of official duties. I have, however, rewritten some of the later chapters in order to bring them into closer accord with the results of recent research and criticism. This may account for some unevenness in its various parts.

My original design was to produce a Primer of Urdu literature for the use of college students and general readers and this led me to decide not to encumber it with footnotes and references. I have, however, consulted original authorities where necessary. The book outran its prescribed length. As the book progressed its scope tended to increase and I was struck with the desirability of giving references to advance the cause of research but it was then found to be impracticable. This deficiency, I hope, I may have the opportunity of remedying in a second edition.

Critics may also complain of the lack of illustrative extracts from the works of the authors herein discussed, but the omission has been deliberate and may, I hope, be justified as also the want of footnotes, by the example of Professor Saintsbury's "A Short History of English Literature," on whose work I have to some extent tried to model my own. Short and casual extracts would not have served my object and to have embodied extracts of sufficient length would have swelled the volume of the book unduly. I hope eventually to be able to publish a companion volume giving extracts of adequate length from the principal authors of each period together with translations and where possible, poetical renderings in English of Urdu verse.

I also felt that no adequate bibliography could be compressed into an appendix of a few pages. Another hope of mine is to

publish separately a bibliography with critical notes under the title of 'Sources of Urdu Literature.'

Another deliberate omission is the work of modern Urdu poets with whom I have dealt in a separate volume and which is ready for publication.

The book being the first work of its kind the wise words of Saintsbury "None but a charlatan will pretend that he has himself written, and none but a very unreasonable person will expect any one else to write, a history of the kind free from blunders" are applicable with peculiar force. Even now the writer has noticed with regret some errors which it is now too late to correct.

I venture to send out the book with all its imperfections to sink or swim. I shall feel amply repaid for my labours if it succeeds in arousing some interest in this noble literature, the best symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity, and in inspiring others to build a noble structure of which this work is merely a slight ground-work.

My sincerest thanks are due to all those whose works I have studied with pleasure and profit but who are unwittingly left unacknowledged; to those who have procured for and supplied me with books and generously answered my references; to those who have read the portions of the manuscript and occasionally helped me in the correction of proofs; to those who have helped me with advice, encouragement and sympathy. My creditors are many and it would be invidious to select a few for mention by name. To them all I take this opportunity of tendering my heart-felt thanks.

Bareilly. RAM BABU SAKSENA.

FOREWORD

In an address which I delivered last year at the Convocation of the Lucknow University I had occasion to express regret at our neglect of Urdu. The average 'educated' Indian in these Provinces has yet to realise the responsibility he owes to the cultivation of his own language and enrichment of his literature. Unfortunately it must be admitted frankly—vernacular literatures in Northern India have suffered more from a false sense of 'nationalism' scarcely to be distinguished from communalism than from any other cause. It is distressing to come across Hindu graduates and under-graduates in some parts of the U. P. who think that their duty towards Hindi necessarily means and implies that they should exclude from their thought the language and literature in which their ancestors only a generation or two ago excelled. It is not less distressing to come across young Mahomedans and old full of grievances against the Hindus for their attitude towards Urdu—but with scarcely any noteworthy record of work in the field of literature of which they suppose themselves to be special custodians and guardians. The divergence of intellectual tastes and the diversity of culture which have been accentuated during the last five and twenty years have only tended to strengthen the forces of that pernicious communalism which is poisoning the springs of generous co-operation, and helpful understanding of each other's point of view. I am not unaware that there has been a sort of literary activity in recent years. How far our literary out-put will enrich our life, how long it is going to endure, are questions which only time can answer. Much of the poetry that is written at the present moment is nothing but metrical prose. It lacks inspiration, it is devoid of ideals, and in not a few instances I have found it to be a powerful contributory cause of the debasement of literary, taste in Urdu. Our prose is scarcely better. The 'best sellers' are not those that aim at ennobling our minds or affording us healthy amusement—but wretched stories of jilted love, perfidy infidelity, intrigue and low cunning. Let this may seem to some as a sweeping condemnation of our men of letters, I am willing to admit that there are happily still a few among us, whose literary effort, though spasmodic, must be acknowledged to be of high order. The number of Urdu poets is legion, but the number of the immortals among them is extremely limited. My own belief is that the only part of India where solid work is being done in Urdu—work which will endure—is Hyderabad. It is for these reasons particularly gratifying to me that it

should have been left to a graduate of these Provinces to find time in the midst of his multifarious official duties to write a history in English of the Urdu language and literature. The famous book of Maulana Azad has already passed into a classic,—but it is not up to date. Recently there have been some excellent books of this character written in Urdu—but if I may speak without disrespect, they lack discrimination and enlightened criticism. I have with much pleasure read this book in manuscript and though one may differ from the author in some of his estimates yet it seems to me that it is impossible to withhold from him praise for the manner in which he has presented a connected account of the rise and growth of Urdu literature from its earliest days right up to the present. It may be that in future editions the learned author may perhaps feel called upon to revise some of his judgments but one thing seems to me to be extremely promising about him and it is that he is not lacking in independence of judgment and courage of expression. His criticism of Urdu poetry in Chapter III is an instance in point. I could multiply instances of this character from other chapters but I refrain. Altogether it seems to me that it is a notable work and Mr. Ram Babu Saxena deserves well of all lovers of Urdu. His book will—and in my opinion should—appeal to all those who may desire to know something of the wonderful manner in which the language grew, of how it has been moulded by various literary craftsmen, and what forces have pervaded it in all its periods. The conditions of service in which a member of the Provincial Civil Service has got to work are not the ideal conditions for work in the field of literature, but Mr. Ram Babu Saxena has shown that even a Provincial Service Officer can keep up the promise of a brilliant academic career and can harmlessly unite literary effort to the duty of keeping law and order.

T. B. SAPRU.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER XIII

PAGE.

CHAPTER XIV

CHAPTER XV

CHAPTER XVI

CHAPTER XVII

CHAPTER XVIII

CHAPTER XIX

A HISTORY OF URDU LITERATURE.

CHAPTER I.

THE LANGUAGE AND ITS ORIGIN.

What is Urduœ

URDU is popularly regarded to be an off-spring of Persian, having been ushered into existence in the camps of the Moslem invaders and the capitals of Moslem Sovereigns in India. People are misled as to its origin by the preponderance of Persianized words, the prosody of its poetry and its script. It is frequently referred to as the language of the Musalmans as opposed to Hindi which is claimed to be the language of the Hindus. An acute controversy has been raging between the protagonists of Urdu and the champions of Hindi over the merits and superiority of one over the other. In the heat of discussion people have forgotten the origin of Urdu. Urdu, by origin, is a dialect of the Western Hindi spoken for centuries in the neighbourhood of Delhi and Meerut and is directly descended from *Saur Senic Prakrit.* This living dialect has formed the basis of Urdu, the name having been given at a later period. It retains its original and essential character in the grammar, idioms and a large number of Hindi words. They all clearly point to its Indian parentage. It was an accident that this dialect became the *lingua franca* of India, for it so happened that Delhi, where this dialect was spoken, became the camping ground and capital of the Musalman invaders and sovereigns. It is therefore clearly wrong to say, as is stated by Mir Aman and early Urdu and foreign writers that Urdu is a "mongrel pigeon form of speech made up of contributions from the various languages which met in Delhi Bazaar." It is true that the camp was an important factor in the life of this dialect and influenced it so largely as to give its own name.* This dialect was in a state of flux and readily assimilated new words and phrases and still shows considerable capacity to absorb words from other sources. The English nomenclature "Hindustani" for Urdu though an improvement over it is misleading, for Hindustani properly comprises many dialects prevalent in Hindustan, *e.g.*, *Eastern Hindi*, *Western Hindi* and *Rajasthani*. It is also slightly incorrect to say that Urdu is derived directly from *Brij Bhasha*, another dialect of Western Hindi as is maintained by Muhammad Husain Azad, for *Brij Bhasha* thought closely akin to and having many similarities with the dialect spoken in the neighbourhood of Delhi, is another dialect spoken in Muttra and surrounding districts. It is its sister dialect that is responsible for the birth of Urdu.

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* Urdu is a Turkish word meaning, camp or army with its followers.

Relation of Urdu to Hindi.

As is mentioned above Urdu owes its existence to the dialect prevalent near Delhi and Meerut, an off-shoot of Western Hindi. Western Hindi is descended from *Saur Senic Prakrit* and has the following dialects ; ***Bangaru***, *Brij Bhasha*, *Kanuji* and the dialect spoken near Delhi. Modern 'High Hindi' was developed from Urdu by the ejection of Persian words and substitution of those of Sanskrit origin. This High Hindi was used as a vehicle for prose and writers frequently drew from the opulent Sanskrit vocabulary. Hindi and Urdu are of the same parentage and in their nature they are not different from each other. But each has taken a different line of development. Urdu, under the tutelage of the Musalmans, has sought its inspiration from Persian while Hindi has reverted to its original fount—Sanskrit. Literary Urdu has thus become widely divergent from the literary Hindi of the present where there is a tendency either to Persianize or to Sanskritise the vernacular.

Debt of Urdu language and literature to Persian.

In the beginning the language was quit simple and homely and sufficed for the few wants of the peasants whose needs were few and whose outlook on life was circumscribed. As it began to develop into a literary language, its vocabulary was enriched with various words from Persian and through Persian from Arabic and Turkish. Writers began to draw upon the resonant Persian to secure variety. Persian constructions foreign to the indigenous dialect began to be imported into and engrafted upon the language. The Persian script was borrowed with some modifications as Persian words could only be written with ease and fluency in it. Urdu poetry modelled itself upon Persian poetry and annexed not only metres but themes, imagery, allusions and peculiar phrases and constructions. It follows the laws of Persian prosody completely and implicitly. Urdu prose was for a long time a thrall of Persian prose. For a time, Urdu verses were crude but faithful translations of Persian verses. So complete was the dominance of Persian over Urdu in thought, subject-matter and style that it completely obscured the nature and origin of Urdu and scholars were not wanting who wrote the grammar of Urdu after the manner of Persian.

Cause of the large influx of Persian words and Persian constructions.

The Muhammadans came as conquerors and their official language, Persian naturally became the sovereign language in India. The vernacular sank to the position of a handmaid writing at a respectable distance on the mistress whose manners and methods it was natural for her to imitate. There has always been a craze for new language and people began to discard the older forms of expression. They disdained to use the homely and simple language of the rustics and turned to the language in ascendant with avidity. The

large preponderance of Persian words in the writings of early Hindi poets is astonishing. Chand Kavi's *Prithvi Raj Ras* teems with these exotics. The narrow range of the dialect tended to absorb words from outside to express various terms and different shades of meaning. The dialect had a meagre vocabulary of Sanskritized words both in their original and corrupted forms. With the advent of the Muhammadans a great change swept over the dialect. The Muhammadan invaders assumed the *role* of sovereigns and made Delhi their headquarters. They came to stay and ceased to be the predatory freebooters who made yearly incursions into India for plunder. With the establishment of the camp and capital at Delhi frequent opportunities occurred which brought the soldiers and natives together. In order to understand each other they picked up words from each other's language but the subservience of the conquered resulted in the adoption of numerous words to the ultimate enriching of the Urdu tongue. The influence of Hindi on Persian was naturally limited as scholars took care to maintain the purity of their language. The process of change, imperceptible but steady, continued as the Muhammadans took root in the country and settled in their acquired territories. The process was quickened in the time of Akbar when a Hindu Revenue Minister insisted that every Government clerk should learn Persian, thus accelerating the crystalization and standardisation of the language. Many revelled in the use of Persian and polyglot words for their resonance and striking effect and to show themselves off as especially cultured. It was also a ready passport to gain attention and preferment in court. Such a change comes over every language when it is confronted by a similar situation. Anglo-Saxon suffered the same fate at the hands of Norman French after the Norman conquest. There are numerous cases of bilingualism in Urdu as there are in English.

The causes for the influx of Persian words are manifold. The Muhammadans as conquerors brought many things which had new names. No counterparts could be found in vernacular or Sanskrit. No periphrase could be accepted and desired and so the Persian names peculiar to the foreigners were incorporated. These new names relate to dress, food, religion and various other things. Being a language of the ruling class, the language of chivalry, war and love, men delighted to use Persian words which were thought to be sonorous, refined and pleasing to the ear. Old familiar words were neglected and homely phrases ruthlessly discarded. Men saw no beauty in them. English had the same history at the time of tht Greek and Latin Revival when learned expressions and 'inkhorn terms' were the order of the day. Mutual intercourse demanded the necessity of a mixed vocabulary which could be intelligible to both and the conquered were more eager to please their masters by adopting their words than the masters who never really cared

for it. Pedants affected foreign words to parade their learning. Urdu literature took its start with poetry and the poetry was a toy in the hands of Persian scholars and poets who dressed it up in the garments of Persianized words. These scholars and poets knew little Hindi and no Sanskrit. It was thus that the child forsook its parents and took its abode with its adopted parents who endowed it largely with their riches. Being in their hands Urdu modelled itself upon Persian in everything. Not only were words despoiled from the coffers of the Persian language but Persian constructions were also annexed. They reversed the position of the governing and governed words, of the adjective and the substantive it qualified, and adopted the use of Persian phrases with the preposition 'ba', all foreign to the indigenous grammar. The literary Urdu of to-day is replete with such borrowed foreign constructions. It must be admitted that the influence of Persian raised a dialect to the dignity of a language though it is to be deplored that it destroyed much of what was valuable in the dialect which it had obtained as a heritage from the parent tongue.

Influence of European languages on Urdu.

The Persian language and literature exercised incalculable influence on the destiny of Urdu. The European languages, Portuguese and English affected it to a great extent. Dutch and French left no mark or so little as not to be perceptible. Portuguese and English enriched the vocabulary. By 1540 A. D. the Portuguese had firmly established themselves in the chief ports of India and were the leading traders in the East. Various colonies dotted the sea-coast and the interior of India. They had more than a temporary interest here. They came in contact with the people as traders, rulers and missionaries. They had advanced themselves considerably and in 17th and 18th century Portuguese was the *lingua franca* of a great part of India. It was the medium of discourse not only between natives of India and Europeans but also between trading Europeans themselves. It was the language of the church through which proselytism in India was carried on by foreign missionaries. It had thus many points of contact with indigenous languages and influenced them in their careers. It influenced Bengali most as it also did the Dravidian languages, Marathi, Assamese and Uriya. It conferred a benefit on Urdu by contributing words and enriching its vocabulary. Such words were introduced in Northern India at the time when the Deccani language which had an opportunity of being influenced by Portuguese owing to its close proximity to the Portuguese settlements and various other Indian languages which had been similarly affected, reacted on Urdu. Portuguese words in native tongues are not found in all their purity but in a corrupted form as they were spoken in India and as they adopted themselves to Indians. The Portuguese not only introduced European words into the

vocabularies of Indian languages but they also transmitted many Arabic, Persian and Hindi words to the opulent coffers of European languages. Some Arabic and Persian words have been re-introduced through Portuguese as the Arabs had exercised influence in Portugal and Spain when they had made a conquest of a great part of those countries. Portuguese words are numerous and a few words are mentioned below. Fruits, Eatables and Condiments :—Achar, Anannas, Afus, Biscuit, Caju, Pamfrit (a kind of fish found at Bombay) Papaiya, Tambaku (tobacco), Taranj, Cha, Sago, Gobhi. Furniture, instruments and arms :—Alpin (pin), Almari (almirah), Arghanun (organ), Bajra (boat), Balti (bucket), Botul (bottle), Pipa (barrel), Pistaul (pistol), Praig (small nail), Chabi (key), Sabun (soap), Koch (sofa), Captan (captain), Karbeen (carbine), Kartoos (cartridges), Mez (table), Towal (towel), Garad (guard). Ecclesiastical terms :—Padri (padre), Girja (church), Kurs (cruz). Wearing apparel :—Saya (gown), Qamis (shirt), Kaj (button-hole), Spat (spats). Miscellaneous :—Ingrez (Englishman), Aya (Aya, nurse), Bamba (pipe), Pagar (pay), Paoroti (loaf), Chhap (printing), Nilam (auction), Mistri (artisans), Kamra (room), Rupia (rupees). The Portuguese were the first to introduce European things in India and hence they introduced them in their tongue with names as they were found in their own language. Ghalib frequently writes about *Portugali Sharab* or Portuguese wine. English is living language and the language of rules. It has exercised, is exercising and will exercise great influence. The contact with English literature was of incalculable advantage to Urdu poetry and prose and will be described at length in a subsequent chapter. English has supplied words where there are no other equivalents and they are current coins on the lips of everybody. The translations from English have helped to bring many words into Urdu. Caution should be exercised in swamping Urdu with English and the tendency to 'purify' the language by the ejection and dislodgement of those English words which have firmly established themselves should be deprecated. Urdu should be enriched and words suited to its genius should be absorbed from any source, English, Persian or Sanskrit. It is the only way to perfect it, to raise it to the dignity of a first class language and to maintain for it its reputation as a cosmopolitan language, the true *lingua franca* of India.

The language of Prose and Poetry.

In every language poetic and prose diction differ. To elevate the style and distinguish poetry from prose, writers employ a more dignified diction rejecting homely words and common place constructions. Persian idioms were engrafted on and imported into the language wholesale. In the early history of Urdu prose rhyming sentences were the order of the day. This jingling prose which was widely

affected and the only recognised standard was a servile imitation of the ornate prose of Zahuri and Bedil. It can be compared to the Elizabethan Euphuism in the use of balanced and antithetical sentences and gorgeousness of imagery. It was the influence of Ghalib and Sir Syed Ahmed and the new era ushered in by Western Education that freed prose from the trammels of rhyme and long-winded Persian constructions. The embellished prose could not live in the practical age which brought in a new movement in literature and the language now employed for prose is simple, natural, direct and vigorous. There is still a preponderance of Persian words but they do not mar the beauty of sentences or make the prose jingling. Simple Hindi phrases are picturesquely used and involved and convoluted constructions are avoided. The poetry still drinks from the fount of Persian and employs an ornate and embellished diction. Hindi idioms are used but sparingly and only when they fit in with Persian words. There has lately been a slight reaction in favour of simple and natural diction from the variegated and florid phraseology which ruled supreme so long. The tendency of the scholar is always unnecessarily, to indulge in Persianized words, both in poetry and prose and this must be deprecated. The difference, however, between the language of prose and poetry is not deep-rooted and essential.

Literary Urdu.

The spoken language always differs from the written. The simple homely phrases which occur so readily to the tongue are replaced by their more fortunate brethren of Persian extraction who commend themselves by their novelty, dignity, resonance and loftiness. In the beginning the dialect was very poor and had a limited vocabulary. It had not attained the status of a language and was crude and unrefined incapable of expressing subtleties and varieties of thoughts though it had beauties of its own.

It was plastic and readily assimilated the words and constructions it borrowed. Gradually it became crystallized and its fluid condition assumed settled form. In the beginning we find poets writing in a language half Persian, half Urdu. Gradually Urdu asserted itself and the conquered absorbed the conqueror. Persian words and unfamiliar constructions took root and were woven into the texture of the language of which they are now an integral part. To dislodge them now from their positions, as is the attempt of some writers who have predilection for Sanskrit is futile although this wholesale change has not been all for good. The Urdu language has now an enormous stock of words and phrases and is a weapon of great flexibility and strength capable of being wielded for any literary purpose.

Early names.

The earliest writers in India, Terry and Fryer, called Urdu, as then prevalent *Indostan*. In the early part of the 18th century writers alluded to the language in Latin as *Lingua Indostanica* or *Hindustanica*. The earliest English writers called the language *Moors*. It was Doctor Gilchrist who is first said to have coined the world *Hindustani* about 1787 A. D. and made it current although the earliest reference to the world could be traced as far back as 1616 A. D. when Yule first mentions it. *Urdu-i-Mualla* or the Exalted Army with its transferred significance the Exalted Urdu, was the name given by Shah Jahan when the language was finally consolidated and made fit as a literary medium. *Rekhta* or Scattered (with Persian words) was coined by scholars to distinguish the literary language they used, from the colloquial, disdaining even to use the word ' Urdu ' which smacked of the bazaar and rough uncultured armies. The word has now fallen into desuetude although in the beginning it was exclusively used for Urdu poetry there being little or no prose. *Hindi* was long used by older writers of the age of Mir and Mushaffi in its distinction with Persian and in showing the language to be the product of the soil, and not being a foreign tongue.

Urdu Script.

The alphabets used for Urdu is the same as that of Persian and Arabic with certain changes and additions for those sounds peculiar to Indian language and not found in the former ones. They are ٹ - ٹھ - ڈ - ڈھ - ڑ - ڑھ either ط is used above the letters ت - د - ر or four dots placed thus : :

Urdu Prosody.

The prosody of Urdu is the prosody of Persian which is the prosody of Arabic. Accent, so important in English poetry, is not thought of in Urdu. There is however vowel quantity after the manner of the classical poetry of Greece and Rome. Rhyme (*Qafia*) and double rhyme (*Radif*) are of great importance in Urdu poetry. The standard metres are nineteen in number but a few are peculiar to Arabic and some have been modified and thus have acquired the appearance of new ones. The metres are obtained either by repetition of the same foot or by combination and modification of the feet recognised by classical prosodians. The feet are represented after the Persian and Arabic, by the conjugation of an Arabic verbal root, in such a way as to indicate the length and quantity of the feet. The same word is repeated through the entire line with the same or a different conjugational form, so as to represent the various lengths and quantities of the feet. The scansion of verses is in conformity with certain standard metres and it takes into account not only letters which are actually written but also those which are pronounced though not written ; while on the other hand no letter which is not pronounced is reckoned in scansion even

though it be written becoming elided. *Alif-i-Mamduda* at the beginning of a word counts as two *Alifs*, *Izafat* counts as one letter. The foot in Urdu is called, *Rukn*, literally pillar or post, which supports a house or tent. *Bait* is the name for verse. One half of the couplet is called *Misrah*, hemistich, or one half of a folding door.

The principal kinds of verse forms recognised in Persian and adopted by Urdu are :—

Ghazal or an ode and *Qasida* or 'purpose poem' are largely affected. They differ from each other mainly in subject and length but employ the same metres and are governed by the same principles with regard to rhyme. The *Ghazal* is generally erotic or mystical and seldom exceeds ten or twelve couplets though the rule is never strictly complied with. The *Qasida* may be and is generally panegyric or a satire or it may be didactic, philosophical, or religious. It must not consist of less than 25 couplets and not more than 170. A *Qita* or a segment, or a portion cut off, is a fragment of *Qasida* or *Ghazal* and differs from them in rhyme. It must not be less than two couplets and may be as long as the *Qasida.* Its first two hemistichs need not rhyme but the second hemistich of every verse must rhyme with the final hemistich of the opening verse throughout. The form of *Qita* or fragments is often chosen for didactic poetry and is oftentimes complete in itself. *Rubai* or quatrain consists of two couplets (whence. called *Dubaiti* or four hemistichs) of which first, second and fourth rhyme and is written in one particular metre, the *Hazaj.* It is not restricted to a particular subject-matter. The fourth hemistich is generally witty, striking and epigrammatic. *Masnavi* "paired, wedded or double-rhymed" is used for ballads, romances, epics and stories in rhyme. Each hemistich rhymes with its fellow, but the same rhyme does not go through the whole poem. There is no restriction imposed as to the number of verses and it may be composed in metres which are limited to five or seven according to some. *Mustzad* or "complemented" or "increment" poem is a poem in which each line has a few additional words beyond the length of the metre. The additional words have generally the metre of the last two feet of the poem itself and have their own rhyme. *Tarjih-band* or "return tie" and *Tarjih-band* or "composite tie" are two kinds of "strophe poems" each consisting of a series of stanzas containing a variable but equal, or nearly equal, number of couplets, all in one rhyme, these stanzas being separated from one another by a series of isolated verses which mark the end of each strophe. If the same verse (which in this case may best be described as a refrain) be repeated at the close of each band or strophe, the poem is called *Tarjih-band* ; if on other hand the verses which conclude each strophe be different the poem is called *Tarkib-band.* In both the cases the metre is the

same throughout. *Murabba* or Foursquare or 'foursome' consists of rhyming hemistichs in sets of four, each set of four being followed by a verse rhyming with the first set. *Mukhammas* or "fivesome or Quintet" resembles the foregoing but each set contains five rhyming hemistichs in the place of four. *Musuddus* or "sixsome or sestet" has the similar structure. In this the first two couplets rhyme and are followed by a couplet in a different rhyme, and sometimes in a different metre. The remaining multiple-poems such as *Musabba* "sevensome" etc., are constructed as explained above. *Wasokht* "burning backwards" "complains of the tortures caused to the lover by the separation of the beloved in which the poet threatens to go away if the sweetheart continue obstreperous and unheedful." *Tarikh* or chronogrammatic poem which gives the year of the event when certain letters are added according to their numerical value.

Fard is any single verse used as a quotation. *Matla* is the opening verse of a *Ghazal* or a *Qasida*. *Maqta* is the final couplet which introduces the *Takhallus* or *nom de guerre* of the author. The work of the poet generally opens with a *Hamd* or praise of God and then follows *Naat* or praise of the Prophet; the *Munajat* or prayer for himself which the poet addresses to God; *Madh-i-Sultan* or the praise of the reigning king; the *Sabab-i-Talif* or reason why the book was written and *Sitayish-i-Sakhun* or praise of poetry. The collected works are called Kulliyat, and it is customary to arrange poems as follows :—*Qasidas*, *Ghazals*, *Qitas*, *Rubaiyats*, *Masnavi*.

Prose is of three kinds: *Ari* (naked) which is simple or unornate; *Murajjaz* or cadenced which has metre without rhyme; *Musajja* or rhymed which has rhyme without metre. There are three kinds of *Nasr Musajja* or rhymed prose; *Mutawazi*, "parallel or concordant"; *Muatrraaf*, "top-sided"; and *Mutawazin*, "symmetrical." In the first kind the rhyming words ending two successive clauses agree in measure (*i. e.*, scansion) and number of letters. In the second kind the rhyming words in two or more successive clauses differ in measure and number of letters. In the third kind the words in two or more successive clauses correspond in measure, each to each, but do not rhyme. These sub-divisions are not now of much use as the later half of 19th century dealt a *coup de grace* to such artificial jingling prose which reigned supreme in the beginning.

Works containing biographical notices on the lives of poets are called *Tazkirahs* and anthologies of their works are called *Guldastas*.

CHAPTER II.

A GENERAL SURVEY OF URDU LITERATURE.

Reasons why poetry is before prose with special reference to Urdu literature.

The beginnings of all literatures are to be found in poetry. Poetry was a vitalizing force long before prose came into being. A passion for rhythmic expression is inborn in human nature. Man feels first and reasons afterwards. In the course of evolution, Poetry which interprets emotion, precedes prose which is wedded to reason. For its mnemonic qualities, for recitation purposes when there was no art of writing known, for its striking effect, poetry is the first in the order of creation. Though prose is more obviously natural to man in conversation, never till after considerable experience does he seem to understand that it is fit to be made a medium of recorded thought or formal writing. The Urdu muse leapt forth with her lyre strung and tuned. Urdu literature, which began as an imitator of Persian models found it easier to copy poetry than prose. The forms of prose are far less easily transferable from one language to another. Urdu, while still in an early stage of existence as a language and while yet almost in the infancy of its literature had great fertility of resource for the expression of the creation of imagination and impassioned thought, for Minerva like it sprang fully equipped from the brain of its noble progenitors. Prose as a vehicle for conveying thoughts is often despised and the early Urdu writers were no exceptions in this case.

Amir Khusru the earliest Urdu poet.

The early growth of Urdu poetry is shrouded in mist and is not very clearly traceable. The first poet of the Urdu language who stands out with any distinctness is Amir Khusru, who is better known, as a great Persian poet of India. He ranks very high in Persian literature and is known widely as the "paroquet of India", *Tuti-i-Hind*. He was the first to employ consciously the racy indigenous Urdu for any literary purpose. He was the first to write a verse in Urdu. He wrote the first Urdu ghazal but it was a hybrid composition, one hemistich being Persian and the other Urdu. The metre was, however, Persian. He is the inventor of many riddles, rhymes, enigmas, and punning verses, which are still popular. These verses though they employ Hindi words are scanned according to Sanskrit prosody and can scarcely be regarded as Urdu verses though Persian words are found here and there. Born in the thirteenth century in the district of Etah in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh he led a chequered life through the reigns of Balban, Kaikubad and other sovereigns of Delhi. He became a distinguished disciple-in-chief of the celebrated Nizamuddin. He was deeply attached to him and died in grief in 1325 A. D. at the death of his *pir*.

He was a great favourite at the Court of Balban who held him in high esteem and love for his scholarship and amiability. Not only was he a great Persian poet ; he was also a skilled musician. To him belongs the credit of first employing Persian metres in Urdu and his famous production *Khaliq-Bari*, a rhymed vocabulary of Arabic and Persian words in common use explained in Urdu, so called because it begins with those words, is still widely read and appreciated by youths. His importance, however, is rather historical than literary. The language was fluid and in process of formation and the poetic diction was limited. Amir Khusru is a finger-post in Urdu literature showing the way for future development.

The long period of preparing. The development of the language.

Great is the gulf between Amir Khusru and the early Urdu poets of the Deccan. Three centuries elapsed before any definite advance took place. This period was one of consolidation. The language was still unformed. It had to acquire vigour, flexibility, and range. It had to be enriched in vocabulary before it could take rank as a fit medium for literature. Persian words and phrases were rapidly coming into vogue. They are found interspersed in the *Padmavat* of Malik Mohammad Jaisi (who flourished about 1540 A. D.) which was found to be written in Persian Script, in the hymns of Kabir (1440-1518 A. D.) and in the writings of Tulsidas (1550-1624 A. D.).

The glorious speech of Akbar.

The popular preachers in order to reach all classes used words both indigenous and foreign. The pace was much quickened in the time of Akbar. He brought the natives of the soil into closer contact with the conquerors. He himself exercised his poetic talents in the language of the people. The nobles at his court imitated him in their patronage of vernacular poets and in their poetic attempts in that language. Translations from Sanskrit into Persian were made by his court poets. Faizi wrote Hindi couplets and Abdul Rahim Khan Khana was the most skilled Hindi poet amongst Akbar's grandees. Perfect amity and agreement between the two peoples tended to foster the development of a language which was a connecting link. A reform in the revenue accounts by Raja Todar Mal was of far-reaching importance to Urdu. Accounts, hitherto, were kept in a sort of Hindi, and the Musalman administrators who knew their language alone were at a disadvantage as they could not understand and check them without the help of an interpreter. A gulf yawned between the native keepers of the account and foreign heads of the departments. To bridge this, a compromise was effected, a *modus operandi* was invented. The heads of the departments began to familiarise themselves with the language of the financiers and the financiers began to learn the language of the court. The subordinates regarded Persian as an essential qualification and a sure passport

for advancement in life. No preferment could come to them unless they knew the sovereign language. Raja Todar Mal, the famous revenue minister of Akbar, passed an order commanding all those who were employed in the financial department to learn Persian. The impetus given at the time of Akbar led to the consolidation and standardising of the language which attained to its full stature at the time of Shah Jehan, and prepared the language as a fit medium for any literary purpose. The work of refining, crystalising and consolidation continued and still continues.

The early Deccan poets and the Courts of the Kings of Golcunda and Bijapur.

Amir Khusru heralded a false dawn. The real dawn came with the rise of Urdu poetry in the Deccan, in the Musalman courts of Bijapur and Golcunda. The causes of such a rise are traced in a subsequent chapter. The Kings of these Muhammadan kingdoms were men of culture and polish and munificent patrons of art. Muhammad Kuli Kutb Shah (1581-1611 A. D.), Sultan Muhammad Kutb Shah (1611-1625 A. D.) Abdulla Kutb Shah (1625-1672 A. D.) and Abul Hasan Kutb Shah (1672-1687 A. D. died in imprisonment in 1704 A. D.) were not only patrons but also poets. Muhammad Kutb Shah, Abdulla Kutb Shah and Abul Hasan wrote in Dakhini dialect, a variant of Urdu, which will be described later on. They have left collections of creditable verses including *Ghazal*, *Rubai*, *Masnavi*, *Qasida* and *Marsia*. These poetical works are extant but not ordinarily available. Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1580-1626 A. D.) and Ali Adil Shah I (1558-1580 A. D.) of Bijapur were men of polish and culture who loved to gather the illuminati of their age in their courts. Ibrahim Adil Shah II himself wrote a work on music in Hindi and the great poet and prose writer of his court Mulla Zahuri (died 1617 A. D.) wrote a prose introduction in Persian which is a masterpiece of style and which served as a model to "jingling" Urdu prose. His predecessor Ali Adil Shah I, was no less distinguished and an eminent poet *Nasrati* flourished at his enlightened court *Nasrati* is the author of many works, chiefly two long *Masnavis* the *Gulshan-i-Ishq* and *Ali Namah*. There is no very great poetic merit in these works and the Dakhini and archaic words which preponderate make them obscure and not easily intelligible. Their worth lies in the fact that they mark a stage in the development of Urdu literature and in the history of Urdu language.

Wali (1668-1744 A. D.)

The stalwart pioneers are ecclipsed by the towering personality of Wali who is commonly called the "Father of Rekhta", the Chaucer of Urdu poetry. With him Urdu poetry makes a serious and definite start. He served as a model for writers of Urdu verses in Northern India. His example and initiative are responsible for the rise and development of Urdu

poetry in Delhi. His style is simple, natural, eloquent and shorn of all long-drawn-out metaphors and rhetorical far-fetched conceits. His poetry is deeply imbued with Sufism. Persian words and themes abound but do not preponderate. The language shows the presence of indigenous words which were later on condemned as archaic, obsolete, uncouth and unfit for poetry.

The older Delhi poets: Hatim, Abru and Arzu.

The centre of poetry shifted to Delhi where Wali's *Diwan* aroused great interest and found numerous imitators. They hailed with delight the new literature and Urdu poetry throve and prospered alongside its formidable and more fortunate rival Persian. The new vernacular had not attained that dignity which could threaten the position of Persian. Urdu poetry was still regarded as a pastime, a new bauble which enchanted them and served as a means of relaxation after their arduous Persian compositions. The Moghul empire though thoroughly shaken and decadent, had not yet vanished and the court language still continued to be Persian. Urdu dared not pit itself against it nor had it yet attained that degree of perfection. The early writers of Urdu verse were all perfect Persian scholars and poets. The example of Wali was emulated by Zahuruddin Hatim (1699-1792 A. D.) Khan Arzu (1689-1756 A. D.), Naji, Mazmun, Abru and a host of lesser luminaries. They are the early father of Urdu poetry in the North. Their writings are replete with Sufistic doctrines. Their style is plain, unadorned and unembellished with a plethora of figures and tropes. Their vocabulary shows greater scholarship and Persian words and constructions are largely used. Indigenous words are replaced by those of Persian extraction. The verses show greater skill and dexterity in the employment of Persian metres in the vernacular. There is a distinct advance in mastery over new forms of composition and technique. The conventional Persian imagery abounds in a greater degree than is found in the works of early Deccan writers of Urdu poetry. The "local colour" has not totally vanished though its disappearance is becoming rapid. The influence of Hindi *Dohras* or couplets is discernible in the ambiguity which forms the pivot of the verse. The works of the older poets of Delhi are mile-stones in the progress of Urdu poetry and language.

The age of Mir and Souda and its achievements and reforms in literature and language.

The next period is one of great glory for Urdu poetry when it blossoms forth with a dazzling magnificence. It is the great age of Souda and Mir, the two great masters of Urdu poetry. They outshine their compeers in the beauty of their style, in the elegance and command of diction, in the mastery of technique, in the loftiness of thought, and in the delicacy of sentiment. *Ghazal* and *Qasida* reached a very high level. The great writers of this remarkable epoch are,

Mazhar, Dard, Soz, Qaim, Yaqin, Biyan, Hidayat, Qudrut, and Zaya. They were all Persian scholars and their ears were attuned to resonant Persian words. They naturally preferred them to the indigenous words which were condemned as harsh and archaic. This age saw the ejection of the so-called obsolete words and archaic constructions which were a marked feature of Wali's writings and those of his contemporaries in Delhi. They not only refined the language but also annexed for their use pleasing phrases and attractive idioms from the Persian sometimes through translation and sometimes without it. Persian phrases were picturesquely used in juxtaposition with racy indigenous expressions. Love themes were handled with a freshness and effect not to be found before. The Persian stores were more thoroughly despoiled of their rich treasures and were made to yield phrases and idioms which were assimilated by the growing language. The conventional imagery, celebrating the love of *Bulbul* and *Gul*, *Qumri* and *Shamshad*, was more frequently employed with a certain adroitness and skill. There was also a noticeable improvement in the art of versification. The lines were more compact, and had a greater swing. There was little looseness about them. They had more vigour and poignancy and appealed better to the ear. Quaint and far-fetched similes and metaphors and rhetorical figures of speech began to make their appearance oftener than before but not to such an extent as to mar the beauty and confound the meaning of verses. They are harmoniously woven and do not obtrude very prominently. New forms of composition were introduced and skilfully handled. *Wasokht*, the regular form of *Marsia*, *Mukhammus*, *Hijv* (satire), *Musullus*, *Murabba*, *Mustzad*, and other varieties of poetry were imported from Persian and cleverly worked. Existing forms were perfected. The writers of this age further removed from the language the old figure of speech, the ambiguity inherited from Hindi *Dohras*. *Ahyam* or ambiguity means that the word on which the meaning of the verse depends has two significations, one obvious and the other far-fetcheed, and it is the latter which is intended by the poet. This *Ahyam* was the delight of older poets though it survived in the writings of later poets too. Mir condemns it but sanctions its use if it is witty and natural. The efforts of Mazhar are creditable in this direction and he was supported by many of his contemporaries and followers. Not only were the poets of this period the originators of certain poetic forms in Urdu but they handled them so cleverly that they laid down the lines for further improvement. Their treatment, however, was conventional modelled strictly on the canons of Persian poetry. The langnage made great and rapid strides and acquired vigour, range and elasticity. By importing new forms and vast stores of words, phrases and imageries they prepared the way for their successors.

The Age of Insha and Mushaffi. Their contribution to Urdu poetry and language.

Another era was ushered in by the later poets of Delhi, Asar, Hasan, Juraat, Insha, Mushaffi, Rasikh, Hasrat, Baqa, Rangin and Firaq. The process of eliminating indigenous words continued and their places were filled by "exotics". Certain "Bhasha" words were undoubtedly harsh and ungainly, not fit to rank in literary composition, but their wholesale expulsion was undoubtedly harmful to the sturdy growth of the language of the soil. It could not preserve its racy words received as a heritage from Sanskrit and Prakrit, from the inroads of Persian. The early Urdu poets were no scholars of Sanskrit or Hindi and they did not befriend those Hindi words; they ruthlessly ejected them, supplementing them by others of Persian and Arabic origin. This process is called by them, and by Muhammadan writers in love with Persian the process of refinement and crystallisation of the language. A further advance was made and old archaic words, which had survived the age of Mir and Souda were cast off. Archaic constructions were replaced by others more elegant and effective. Hindi idioms and Persian idioms were welded into greater solidarity. No new departure was made in style. Old themes were not amplified though there is a marked tendency towards the sensual side of poetry. This poetry reflects the age and mirrors the degenerate times and corrupt society of Delhi. Physical beauty was more often eulogised. One group of poets debased their art by openly singing about their grosser passions. Juraat, Insha and Rangin are in this group.

Rekhti.

Licentiousness finds its outlet in a new style of composition in the language of harem—the *Rekhti*, a word coined from *Rekhta* to denote feminine gender. The language of the harem contains nothing in itself harmful, but it was deliberately used as a vehicle for conveying lewd sentiments. The verses written in the language of the *Zenana* were more often than not, immoral and lascivious in character, not fit for delicate ears. Indecency and obscenity are the marks of every literature which is not intended to be used for women. The gradually advancing education of women has been one of the most prominently purifying influences in every literature. There are stray examples of this peculiar form of composition in older poets such as Maulana Hashmi of Bijapur and Syed Mohammad Qadri Khaqi, a contemporary of Wali, but the distinction of reviving it and making it current belongs to Rangin and his friend Insha. The great exponent of *Rekhti* was Mir Yar Ali Khan popularly known by his feminine *nom de plume* of *Jan Sahab*. Insha, however, was a versatile genius and he never seriously attempted this debased and lecherous form of composition but Jan Sahab took to it earnestly and devoted himself to it. Fortunately, with the changes of time this degraded kind of

poetry never took root though a few sporadic cases occurred here and there.

(The writers of this period excel in ghazal. Masnavi and Qasida were also greatly practised. The people were bathed in the atmosphere of poetry and poetical assemblies, *Mushairas*, were nightly convented in various parts of the city of Delhi. This epoch also saw the exodus of poets from Delhi to seek 'fresh woods and pastures new'. Most of them flocked to the cultured courts of Lucknow where patronage was lavishly showered on the poets. The best productions of this age are the *Masnavis* of Mir Hasan and his brother Mir Asar, which rank very high in literature. The best is that of Mir Hasan, entitled *Sihar-ul-bayan*. The flow and naturalness of verses, the ringing effect of rhyme, the elegance and sweetness of diction, and the harmonious blending of the whole are some of the outstanding features of *Sihar-ul-buyan*.)

The age of Ghalib and Zauq and its characteristics.

The next age to be mentioned is that of Naseer, Zauq, Ghalib, Momin and Zafar. The language was further Persianized by the eviction of indigenous words and phrases which had escaped the previous periods. As Ghalib and Momin were great Persian scholars and wrote copiously in that language, they made further depredations on the Persian idioms and constructions, and imported them largely in their Urdu verses usually with disastrous results. Naseer is the connecting link between the preceding age of Insha and Mushaffi and that of Ghalib and Zauq which followed. Nazeer Akbarabadi stands by himself and is one of the most attractive personalities of Urdu literature. In Ghalib and Momin, we find the beginnings of those far-fetched subtle metaphors and long drawn out Persian constructions, thickly overlaid with extravagant hyperbole which, though capable of pleasing effect in the hands of a master, are sure to be an instrument of destruction in a less skilled hand. Fortunately they did not gain currency, and Urdu poetry escaped the great danger of being made a complete thrall of Persian poetry. The works of Momin and Ghalib are sometimes unintelligible for this reason. Zauq, though less original than Ghalib, has greater mastery over the language and homely idioms. His verses are well-polished and sweet. Zafar though he had excellences of his own, was not so talented as Ghalib and Zauq and frequently sought their aid. His verses are extraordinarily similar to those of Zauq and this has led some to believe that they were originally Zauq's but were appropriated by Zafar, whose poetical master he was. This period is glorious for Ghazal and Qasida. The Ghazals and Qasidas of Zauq and Ghalib are standards for all time for Urdu poetry. Poets exercised their muse on flinty grounds and new experiments in difficult metres and stiff rhymes were made in order to show their mastery over both prosody and language. People vied with each other to

demonstrate their skill in handling such difficult rhymes and metres. Such attempts however never show much poetic merit and elegance. In short, the age saw the expulsion of indigenous words, an improvement in the language, the importation of intricate Persian constructions and an originality of thought, especially in the Urdu works of Ghalib.

The New School of Urdu poetry at Lucknow and its characteristics : the age of Nasikh and Atish and its services to Urdu language.

The age of Nasikh and Atish marks the rise of the Lucknow school of Poetry. At first Lucknow served as an asylum for the refugees from Delhi. The light brought from Delhi kindled local genius and Lucknow had a crop of Urdu poets of its own. Nasikh and Atish belong exclusively to Lucknow. Poetry received a great impetus and the Court of the Nawabs of Lucknow fostered and encouraged it as never before. People went crazy over it and poetical contests were the order of the day. Popular applause was breath to the poet's nostrils ; poetical assemblies were convened in many places daily, weekly and monthly ; constant practice enabled the poets to attain considerable literary excellence, and mastery over varieties of composition. The forms of poetry were standardised and perfected. The language was fully exercised and Hindi words, which had survived previous onsets, were ejected and their places filled by words of foreign extraction. Archaic constructions which had clung and had not yet been shaken off were finally discarded. To Nasikh belongs the credit of giving the final touches to the language. By his very poetical surname he assumes the role of an abrogator of old forms. He plumes himself on the reforms he wrought in the language. A new era in Urdu poetry was inaugurated by Nasikh. The verses of this school are essentially florid and ornate, abounding in rhetorical embellishments and overlaid with metaphor. Conventionality of treatment, extravagant hyperbole, a plethora of far-fetched and hackneyed similes, want of emotion, lack of subtle analysis of sentiment, are some of the outstanding features of this class of poetry. The verses are cast in a conventional mould and hence are artificial and unemotional. They are however extremely clever and fluent, and commended themselves vastly to the people. They leapt into favour and commanded a large following. The works of Nasikh, Bahr, Wazir, Saba, Sahr, Rashk and other disciples of Nasikh reigned supreme for a long time until taste veered round, once more, to the unconventional and natural. Side by side flourished a great master of Urdu Ghazal, Atish, who had more poetic fire than Nasikh but was a less learned man. He is linked to the old order of poets and his style is simple, chaste, elegant and full of fire and pathos. He is not as clever a workman as Nasikh, nor was he overweighted by too much learning. His service to the language was also considerable but not so great

as that of Nasikh. He also commanded a large following and the rivalries of these two great masters led to the development of Urdu poetry.

Marsias and their debt to Urdu literature.

An older form of poetic composition which had fallen into disuetude was revived with surprising effect by Khaliq, his son Anis and Dabir the contemporary of Anis. There is a long list of *Marsia* writers. The elegy is as old as Urdu poetry. It existed in Arabic and was developed in Persian from which it was transplanted into Urdu. In its crude imperfect form it is found in the works of Dakhini poets, with whom it was very popular. In Lucknow it was revived with great force and striking effect when the Nawabs of Lucknow adopted the beliefs and tenets of the Shias with whom to mourn the death of the noble martyrs is a principal article of faith. The mourning in Moharram now extended to forty days instead of the customary ten days and the whole city of Lucknow wore a most sombre aspect during that period. The Shias poured forth their grief and lamentations in noble and passionate *Marsias.* Sometimes the Nawab-Kings themselves composed them and recited them to the weeping and mourning audience. The brightest stars are Anis and Dabir whose voluminous compositions are full of fire and genuine poetry. These Marsias have redeemed the credit of Urdu poetry. Moral in their tone, a pleasing contrast to the sensual poetry of the school of Nasikh, freed from turgid bombast and extravagant hyperbole, vivid in their descriptions of scenes and realistic in their portrayal of human emotions, the Marsias have rendered a great service to Urdu literature and language.

Importance of Nazeer Akbarabadi.

They herald the dawn of a new era in Urdu poetry. To Nazeer and the Marsia writers belongs the credit of writing landscape poems. Nazeer is essentially a poet of India and describes its festivals and fairs. All his poems are thoroughly Indian in subject-matter and spirit and contain local colour to the fullest extent.

The Courts of Rampur and Hyderabad and their poets. The Age of Ameer and Dagh.

Ameer, Dagh, Jalal and Taslim who belong to the succeeding age drifted into various Muhammadan Courts after the deposition of Wajid Ali Shah and the Indian Mutiny. The Courts of Rampur and Hyderabad, great centres of Urdu Poetry, attracted these poets who had been cast out from their homes by untoward events. They however founded no separate schools but carried on the traditions of the past. The poetical contests at these various courts and at the houses of the grandees of the State led to the multiplication of the old stuff, Ghazal, Qasida, Rubai and Qita. Ameer successfully copies his predecessors with most of the evils of the school of Nasikh suppressed. Dagh writes with fire and great ease but his facile muse lacks sublimity. Jalal has no special distinction except that he paid great attention

to his language and imitated his masters with great skill. Nothing original was however contributed to the development of Urdu poetry.

The new movement in Urdu poetry: the age of Azad and Hali and its contributions to the development of Urdu poetry.

The new movement in Urdu poetry has revolutionised its character. Its high priests, Azad, Sarur and Hali have introduced new themes, and fresh styles. Landscape poems, national poems, poems of imagination and description, were effectively written for the first time unhampered by conventionality, untrammelled by set rules and prescribed canons. The sphere of Urdu poetry was widened and its scope enlarged. There was a personal note in the poems. Spontaneity, simplicity, pathos and genuine emotion are found in abundance. New forms of versification were invented and perfected. This change was brought about by the new order of things after contact with English literature. Hali is the great national poet. Azad is the founder of 'natural' poetry. Sarur is the master of sentiment and description. Akbar is the originator of a new kind of poetry which finds its highest development in him. Iqbal has philosophy and naturalism for his themes. Hasrat embodies in himself the spirit of the age. Even in ghazals there has been effected a reformation. The new movement has liberalised Urdu poetry and has opened new vistas and explored fresh avenues for its future development.

Urdu prose. The Fort William College at Calcutta.

The rise of modern Urdu prose dates from the beginning of 19th century at the Fort William College at Calcutta under the able superintendence of Doctor John Gilchrist who was then at the head of that institution. He imported a distinguished band of native scholars from Northern India to write text books for the raw officers hailing from England in order to equip them efficiently for the administration of the country and facilitate their intercourse with its inhabitants. Before the foundation of this famous College there were works in Urdu prose which were either religious in character or fairy tales and romances and were mostly translations, crude, imperfect and unfinished, from the original Persian. No attempt was made to polish the style or to improve the syntax. *Dah Majlis* and *Nau Tarz Murassa* are samples of the then existing Urdu prose. The principal writers employed to translate books from Persian and Sanskrit and to compose original works in easy simple and direct language, for the benefit of European officers were Syed Mohammad Haider Baksh, Hyderi, Bahadur Ali Hussaini, Mir Aman Lutf, Hafizuddin Ahmad, Mazhar Ali Wila, Ikram Ali and Mirza Ali Lutf. Their writings and translations were distinguished by purity, simplicity, and elegance of style. All ultra-Persian and Sanskrit words were ruthlessly ejected. They served as standards for

prose compositions for more than half a century and supplied a basis for future development. "To the exertions of Dr. John Gilchrist, we owe the elaboration of the vernacular as an official speech and the possibility of substituting it for the previously current Persian, as the language of courts and government." To him is also due the credit of compiling lexicons and treatises on grammar.

The 'rhyming' prose of Lucknow—Rajjab Ali Beg Sarur.

Side by side with the prose of the Fort William College at Calcutta, flourished 'the rhyming prose' written after the Persian models of Zahuri and Bedil. It was highly embellished with balanced sentences and carefully prepared antithesis. It was thickly overlaid with rhymes, double rhymes, imageries and figures of speech. The sentences were long and involved ending in a rhyme often obscuring the sense. They moved slowly. For a very long time this kind of jingling prose held its sway over Delhi and Lucknow. Letters, when not written in Persian, were written in Urdu in *Nasr Murassa* and *Nasr Musajjah*. Exordiums and prefaces, eulogistic notices of books and Dewans, and reviews were either written in Persian or in Urdu in rhyming prose. The greatest representative of this sort of prose is Rajjab Ali Sarur whose master-piece *Fisanai-Ajaib* is not only remarkable for its style but also for interesting pictures of Lucknow life.

Daryai Latafat of India.

Insha and Qatil's Daryai Latafat written in a mixture of Urdu and Persian has also a historical importance for not only was it the first treatise on Urdu grammar by a native of the country but it also gives specimen of various dialects which influenced Urdu and the peculiar idioms current in literary centres.

Ghalib.

A great personality in the history of Urdu prose is that of Ghalib whose charming letters published in two volumes under the title of *Urdu-i-Mulla* and *Oodi Hindi* are remarkable for their subtle and piquant humour, simplicity, spontaneity, frankness and unconventionality. The letters are written in simple, natural, breezy and fascinating style and they are models of elegant prose. There is a personal note in the letters with absolutely no stiffness or artificiality about them. The style of Ghalib heralded a revolt in the domain of Urdu prose and influenced his successors to a great extent. Ghalib, however, could not completely escape the tyranny of his age for he had to conform to the existing practice of writing reviews and prefatory notices in rhyming prose then prevalent.

Influence of Christian missionaries.

The influence of Christian missionaries in moulding Urdu prose cannot be ignored. To reach the masses of India these missionaries, notably those stationed at Serampore in Bengal, translated their

scriptures into the vernaculars of the country and disseminated them far and wide. They also published tracts and pamphlets in Urdu to appeal to the people at large. They are partly responsible for the birth of vernacular journalism in India. The early translations of the Bible from 1805 to 1814 were mostly in Urdu.

The religious reformers and their debt to Urdu.

The halcyon days of Urdu prose were in the latter half of the nineteenth century when Sir Syed Ahmad and his distinguished band of scholars gave a great impetus to the development of Urdu. Religious controversies carried on by Mahomedans amongst themselves and with Christians and Hindus did much to improve Urdu prose. The pamphlets written in attack and in defence were all couched in plain simple vigorous Urdu. Though these books were polemic in character and ephemeral in interest yet an attempt was made to render prose simple direct and vigorous. The religious reforms of Syed Ahmed (1782-1831 A. D.) and the doctrines preached by him aroused controversies which gave birth to many tracts and brochures. The Quran was first translated into Urdu in about 1803 A. D.

Syed Ahmad 1782-1831.

Sir Syed Ahmad and his services to Urdu literature and language.

The reforms adumbrated by Syed Ahmad were amplified and carried on with greater vigour by Sir Syed whose manifold activities, educational, journalistic, social, religious, philosophical, moral, political and quasi-political benefited Urdu to the greatest possible extent. He originated a style suitable for all kinds of prose. His various Urdu works and his numerous articles in *Tahzeebul Akhbar* and other papers of India are creditable performances deserving high praise.

Fellow workers of Sir Syed Ahmad.

The fellow workers of Sir Syed Ahmad are an ornament to Urdu literature. The national poems and critiques of Hali who was the national bard, the historical works of Shibli and Zakaullah, the controversial writings of Cherag Ali and Mohsin-ul-mulk, the didactic stories and lectures of Nazir Ahmad with his quaint humour, all these were not only directed to the cause of the regeneration of the writers' coreligionists but appealed to a wider class of people. The delightful prose of Mohammad Hussain Azad and his numerous works with their racy piquant style have thrilled the hearts of many and are the proud and valued possession of Urdu literature. It was in the latter half of the nineteenth century that the influence of English was most felt. It liberalised Urdu literature and furnished new forms in prose. Books on criticism, history, travels, and sciences began to be written. The introduction of printing and lithography gave a powerful stimulus to the multiplication of works original transla-

Western influence on Urdu literature.

Introduction of Printing.

tions and fresh editions of classics. The substitution of Urdu for Persian as an official language in 1832 A. D. raised the status of the vernacular and considerably enriched its vocabulary as all the terms of judiciary were appropriated by Urdu.

Urdu made official language 1832 A. D.

The rise of fiction, the birth of the historical novel and the growth of journalism are the natural concomitants of the renaissance ushered in by the English. They are too important to be passed over and must be left to be treated befittingly in subsequent chapters. The foundation of the Osmania University at Hyderabad with Urdu as its medium of instruction and the institution of the Nadwa Academy of Shibli are but manifestations of the spirit prevailing and mark the culmination of Urdu as a literary language of India.

Growth of Urdu novel:

The Urdu Drama is purely a local product. It had no Persian model to copy. It is still in infancy and has not yet attained to any marked literary excellence. The Dramatists lack sureness of touch; with the result that their characterization is inexact, their plots and situations are seldom skilfully devised or elaborated. Their works are full of harangues, rants and rough horseplay. Shakespeare and other European writers have been translated and adapted to the Indian stage. But the drama is full of promise and has a hopeful future before it.

Urdu Drama.

CHAPTER III.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF URDU POETRY.

Old Urdu poetry an imitation of Persian poetry in themes, diction, style, imagery and prosody.

Older Urdu poetry was not an indigenous product. It drew its inspiration from Persian and copied foreign models. It was dominated by the prosody of the Persians which had been invented by the Arabs. It tacitly adopted Persian metres and its canons of versification. Gradually this exotic took root and in course of time became thoroughly acclimatized. Urdu poets not only appropriated the metres but annexed the ready made, much exercised imagery and hackneyed themes of Persian. They were imported wholesale without much regard to the origin and capacity of the Urdu language and in course of time constituted the sole stock-in-trade of succeeding poets. This bondage to Persian had its strength and weakness. Urdu poetry did not pass through that process of grinding which, though slow, is very invigorating and healthy for a budding language. It had no evolution such as English poetry had. Hence its range is very limited for it sank into the ruts of old battered Persian themes and adorned itself with the rags of the cast off imagery of Persian poetry having absolutely no relation to India, the country of its birth. In the beginning many Urdu verses were literal translations of Persian verses. The writers of odes still seek inspiration in the works of Saib, Hafiz, Naziri and Bedil.

The defects of such an imitation.

1. It made Urdu poetry seem unreal.

This greedy absorption and servile imitation invests Urdu poetry with a sense of unreality and often is the cause of its debasement. India is a stranger to the mellifluous songster the nightingale, the 'bulbul i hazar dastan' shamshad (poplar tree), sarv (cypress), nargis (Narcissus) sausan (eglantine), sumbul (spikenard) to the burning love of Majnun for Leilah, of Farhad for Shirin, to the bravery of Rustam, Afrasiyab and Asfandyar, to the paintings of Maani and Bahzad, to the ebb and flow of the Jehun and the Sehun, to the heights of Alwand and Besutun. Facts were divorced from poetry and Urdu poetry was rendered a servile imitation of Persian with no distinctive individuality of its own. The kings of India were to be compared in his justice only to Naushirwan, or in his generosity to Hatim, the melancholy lover could know no type but Majnun and the mistress of his affection resembles none but Leilah or a Leilah in charms, or a young Turk in harshness. The beauty of opening manhood finds no parallel but in that of Joseph, " the moon of Cannan ", and the patient endurance of hard commands is represented by the indefatigable labours of Farhad, who dug through

a second Athos, in order to win the love of the peerless Shirin. Lovers mad like Majnun and Farhad, mistresses with the stature of cypress or poplar, eyes of the narcissus and the cruelty of the Turk, the Bulbul sighing for union with the Gul and pouring forth incessantly its thousand tales, the Zephyr which drops pearls, the thin gauze-like cloth which rends itself at the sight of the moon, all these are offshoots of Persia. The considerable influx of imagery hardened Urdu poetry and made it despise its own indigenous vocabulary and similes which it had inherited from its mother tongue and made it insensible to the true beauties of nature as found in India. The rainy season of India is glorious but no true and worthy description of it is found in old Urdu poetry. The heat of India, the spring, the eternal snows of the Himalayas, the fertilising power of the Ganges and the Jumna with their magnificent flow have all escaped the attention of early poets. The sweetness and grace of Bhasha was sacrificed to the languorous beauty of an exotic. Blindly, slavishly, Urdu poetry followed its model in all its details. Sir Charles Lyall thus condemns this Urdu poetry. "The whole of Urdu poetry follows Persian models of composition ; its themes are those which had already been worked (some might say worked out) by writers in that language ; and neither in form nor in substance do we find the faintest flavour of originality from its commencement to the present day. The paucity of themes and want of originality in Urdu had led to a most elaborate development of the system of rhetoric. Where the substance of what a poet has to say is identical with that which has been said by hundreds nay thousands of poets before him, it is of the highest possible importance that the way of saying it shall if possible be peculiar to himself. Rhetoric accordingly rather than poetic feeling is the distinguishing feature of composition in Urdu. Pleasing hyperbole, ingenious composition, antithesis, alliteration, carefully arranged gradation of noun and epithet, are the means employed to obtain variety".

2. It made Urdu poetry rhetorical.

Not only is the poetry rhetorical but it is extremely conventional. Stock metaphors and similes are continually recurring. There is no true observation of nature at first hand. There is no freshness of theme or treatment, no new message to deliver. There is a harking back to the previous writers for themes of poetic inspiration. Poetry was reduced to a matter of rule and compass. Every warbler and imitator of great writers knew his tune by heart.

3. It made Urdu poetry conventional.

It became mechanical and listless with the same rhymes, the same metaphors, the same allusions, the same figures of speech, and the same devices. In conformity with the Persian model, Urdu poetry adopts rhyme and double rhyme which

4. It made Urdu poetry mechanical, artificial and sensual.

though pleasing to the ear retards the free flow of ideas. Very often it is the rhyme which suggests the idea and not the idea which suggests the rhyme. The insistence of rhyme restricts the freedom of the poet for he must be ready with a suitable rhyming word or Qafia. It smothers spontaneity and natural flow. This artificial way of versification when the rhyming word dictates the thoughts is responsible for the tons of insipid stuff that masquerades in the garb of poetry. English poetry shed this shackle at an early date and the free movement of the English verse has contributed not a little to the richness of its literature. This sameness and tameness has resulted in a monotony which is repugnant even to an oriental who is brought up in its atmosphere.

5. It made Urdu poetry unnatural.

Not only did imitation make poetry conventional, rhetorical, artificial and sensual but it made it, what is worse, unnatural. The metaphors may not correspond with the facts of nature. But the vitiated and perverse poetry of the Persian celebrating the love of a man for a boy of tender years was copied without excuse or justification. The boy is regarded as a mistress and his curls, his tresses, the down on his cheeks, his budding moustache, the moles on his face are celebrated with gusto in a sensual manner revolting to the mind.

The mode of address in poetry in Bhasha and in Urdu.

This pernicious and debased practice has senselessly been followed by early Urdu poets and is perpetuated unconsciously by the conventional modern poets. Bhasha has scored a triumph over Urdu in the purity and refinement of its sentiments. The writer either addresses his songs of woe and wails as a love-lorn neglected damsel to the careless husband or fancy-free lover ; or he confesses his hopeless love to his mistress who does not respond to his advances. The love of Urdu poets in old conventional ghazals is the unnatural passion of man for an adolescent or the unhealthy love for a courtesan. The emotions depicted in Bhasha poetry are genuine and natural and make a direct appeal to the heart. The sentiments contained in those poems are ennobling and exalted. On the contrary, amatory verses in Urdu celebrating the beauties of adolescents and wanton women, contain sentiments which are often unnatural, unreal and debased. It is a natural and direct result of being under the leading strings of Persian. Urdu poetry being its hand-maid found no room for its natural development. Its evolution on its own lines was always dwarfed by Urdu poets and scholars who were doting masters of Persian. They trifled with Urdu thinking it to be a pastime, a plaything, a relaxation from arduous composition in Persian. They knew little or nothing of Hindi or Sanskrit and did not care to know anything about them. Persian was the official language,

the language of the nobles, of the courtiers, of the scholars and of the poets. They naturally regarded Hindi words as uncouth and harsh and replaced them by Persian ones. They modelled Urdu poetry and language on the lines of Persian. The dignified position of Persian as the language of Court, chivalry and poetry, and the lack of knowledge of Hindi and Sanskrit on the part of early writers and masters are responsible for the slavish imitation of Persian by Urdu. Urdu in the beginning had no stature. It was looked down upon. The early Urdu poets were also Persian poets and even Ghalib wanted to be remembered by his Persian works rather than by his Urdu poetry.

The unnatural mode of address in Urdu poetry explained.

In Arabic, the lover usually addressed his verses to his cousin by name to whom he was ultimately married. Sometimes this address by name was taken as an insult and often proved to be a principal source of bloodshed and feuds. Fanciful and imaginary female names were then substituted. The seclusion of women and the institution of the *Purdah* forbade the name of the beloved to be taken openly, and either they were called after some well-known character famous in love poetry or they were addressed in the masculine gender as a mark of respect. Persian had no separate prepositions to differentiate between masculine and feminine gender in the animate or the inanimate world. The same preposition served for both and confusion is partly attributable to this. These considerations may be pleaded in extenuation if not in justification of the monstrous unnaturality of this form of address in Persian but in Urdu which has distinct prepositions for genders and the capacity of verbs definitely to point to this end there is absolutely no excuse for originating and perpetuating this revolting form. Literature mirrors the society of the country, and the evils sometime rampant in that country are reflected in Persian literature of that period. It is true that the love for the boy is often a figure of speech while the beauty described is frequently that of the woman. But the love depicted is not of an exalted order or of a healthy type for the very conditions of the society—the *purdah*—forbade any romantic love.

Ghazals form the bulk of Urdu poetry.

The bulk of Urdu poetry consists of the Ghazal, the Qasida, the Marsia, the Masnavi, the Qita and the Rubai, and similar other forms of composition.

Sufism, the dominant note of Urdu poetry in the beginning.

The most practised form of composition is the Ghazal which is erotic or mystical in character. The dominant note of Urdu poetry in the beginning was Sufism. The whole of its early literature is saturated with it. A wave of religious revival passed through India in the Middle Ages. The doctrine of *Bhakti*, the cults of Rama and Krishna which greatly affected Hindi literature

are but manifestations of the religious ideals floating in the air. The early Urdu poets were all Sufis. They were descendants of saints and holy friars who had migrated into India along with the conquering hordes or had followed in their wake. They had inherited Sufistic tendencies and practised its doctrines to the admiration and reverence of the people. Wali, the earliest great poet of Urdu, was a Sufi, a descendant of holy men, and a disciple of a Sufi, Shah Saadullah Gulshan. Shah Mubarak Abru, one of the early writers of Urdu poetry, was the soul of Sufis in Delhi and was a descendant of the celebrated Shah Mahomad Ghos of Gwalior. Sheikh Sharafuddin Mazmuu, a fiery soldier, became an ardent convert to Sufism. Shah Hatim was a celebrated Fakir, Jan Jana Mazbár was an enthusiastic Sufi. Mir Dard, a descendant of the famous saint Khwaja Bahauddin Nakhshband, was a most conspicuous Sufi poet. There are glimmerings of Sufi doctrines in the works of Mir Souda and Ishq and other poets of the age. Persian poetry was replete with Sufistic verses and when it served as a model it naturally endowed Urdu with Sufism. It was but natural that Urdu songs should bear its imprint.

Sufism explained.

"To be painstaking in piety, to give up every thing for the sake of God, to avoid worldly shows and vanities, to renounce pleasure, wealth and power which are the general objects of human ambition, to lead in seclusion a life solely dedicated to the service of God, such were the fundamental principles of Sufism". Sufi poets were much given to praising physical beauty for according to them, 'worldly love was a ladder leading to spiritual love'. They wrote about terrestrial love to train and prepare people for Love Divine and to make themselves understood to the general run of mankind by symbolism. Sufism is responsible for the curious blend of spirituality and sensualism which marks the love songs of Persia and India.

Erotic element in Urdu poetry.

Erotic poetry in Urdu is clearly traceable to Sufism, to court influence, and to the imitation of Persian amorous poetry. The most characteristic form of poetry is the Ghazal which resembles somewhat to an English sonnet. The word literally means, 'to talk to women' or 'to talk amorously'. It consists of certain strings of verses each complete in itself. This is where it differs from the sonnet as it does not permit of a continuous description of beauty or a prolonged analysis of emotion. It is the easiest and consequently most practised form of composition. Continuity in the Ghazal is the exception rather than the rule. Its scope is very limited and this limitation is its source of strength as it enables the writer to concentrate and focus all his powers on one line. The subjects are various. The wailings of hopeless love, the yearnings of an impassioned lover, the cruelties of disdainful mistresses, the loves of Bulbul and Gul, the various phases of madness, the ecstasy of

love, the various points of beauty, the pleasures of the conventional gardens, the delights of the ruby-coloured wine, the machinations of the rivals are some of the staple topics. The erotic element is universally found in all literatures. It is the primal force and must assert itself everywhere. It has assumed different forms in different places. Sufi doctrines regarded physical beauty as a stepping stone to heavenly love. Hence its delight in sensual beauty which was degraded and debased in the hands of poets not capable of realizing the ecstatic fervour of the saints. Their mistresses when not boys were *demi monde* who could charm and enthral every one and who were accessible to all and sundry. They were credited with trickery, hypocrisy, arrogance, meanness, and every species of low cunning. In its conceptions, Sufism tended to elevate and chasten emotion by seeking the Union of God but in common minds it became synonymous with the delights of lewdness and sensuality. The veiled and symbolic reference was lost sight of and often ignored. Sufism made use of earthly imagery to make itself understood. It was however misunderstood both by readers and writers especially in the voluptuous courts of the pleasure-seeking Kings of Delhi and Nawabs of Oudh.

The influence of Court on Urdu poetry.

Classic Urdu poetry has always been a favourite of the courts and has thriven in the halls of princes and nobles. Delhi, Lucknow, Hyderabad, Rampur have been centres of poetic activities. The Courts of Moghul Kings at Delhi and one of the princes at Lucknow, of the Nawabs of Oudh at Lucknow, of the Nawab of Rampur and of the Nizam of Hyderabad have always fostered poetry. This Court patronage was a source of both strength and weakness for on the one hand it doled out rewards to encourage poetry, on the other it hampered its free movement and unrestrained development. One of the causes of the decay of old Urdu poetry was the extinction of the kingdoms of Delhi and Oudh and the waning interest of other patron-rulers. Love themes were indulged into satiety especially in the court of the later Nawabs of Oudh. It grew up Cabinned and cramped and pandered to the taste of those for whom it was written. It is no wonder that the great bulk of Urdu poetry was dedicated to the worship of Venus and Bacchus. The Court poets wrote only Qasidas and Ghazals —Qasidas in praise of their patrons and Ghazals to celebrate some real or imaginary love. They chiefly depended for subsistence on the bounty of some nobleman or prince and it behoved them to please them by writing Qasidas and reciting Ghazals. Scott's lines may apply to some of them with great force.

> "A ribald King and Court
> Bade them toil on to make them sport
> Demanded for their niggard pay
> But for their souls a looser lay."

Being an adjunct of the courts, Urdu poetry lacked that variety, that richness, that expansiveness, that originality which characterize the best and greatest literatures of the world.

Limited range of Urdu poetry. Lack of pastorals and landscape poems.

The range of Urdu poetry is limited. Nature so fruitful a theme for poets of West had not much inspiration for Urdu bards. There are no Briants, no Whittiers, no Thompsons in Urdu. There is no rapturous adoration of Nature like Wordsworth. There is not much written on purling streams and wavy fields, and singing birds although the conventional descriptions of spring and gardens, with the ubiquitous Bulbul are plentiful. Many Urdu poets had a lyre of but one string and they harped and harped till they became monotonous. There is no sea poetry, no songs of freedom, no glowing passion for beauty. Court-ridden it celebrated the much worn out love for wine and courtesan the intrigues of the rivals, the woe and despair of the lover, the complaints about the tyranny of sky and untowardness of fate. It is only lately after the impact of western culture and literature that new ground has been broken and the scope of poetry widened though there is still much room for improvement.

Pessimistic and melancholy character of Urdu poetry.

Eastern poetry, Urdu poetry included, is saturated with pessimism. "The oriental, by his mental constitution, is mystical, melancholy, imaginative, rather than practical, fatalistic in his tendencies. There is a note of profound melancholy and deep pathos, a note of weariness and disgust with life ; a note or utter hollowness of worldly ambitions and worldly dreams of prosperity. From the weariness of life, he in spite of himself, is drawn and diverted to religion and mysticism. The impassioned invocations to God, the futile fight against the triumphant machinations of fate, the impotence or human will, the piteous wail against the oppression of times and tyranny of the sky all reveal the Easterner's ingrained nature. Apart from the natural tendencies of oriental writers to be melancholy there was yet another cause, a contributory cause which tended to deepen, to accentuate this tendency in India. At the beginning of Nineteenth Century the star of the Mohammadans had set, the glory and greatness of Mohammadans were at an end." There is no sturdy optimism and buoyancy as found in Browning. This mystic melancholy, however, has lent a peculiar and incomparable charm to some of the fine compositions of Dard and Mir and can be traced in the writings of Anis and Dabir.

Qasida.

The Qasidas had for their models the masterpieces of Anwari, Khaqani, Urfi, Qaani, and Zahir Faryabi. The great masters of Urdu Qasida are Souda, Zouq, and Amir. Being modelled on Persian Qasidas, the language employed is dignified, learned and elevated. High sounding

phrases, extravagant hyperbole, far fetched metaphors and grand similes are employed to give dignity to the composition. As they were written to please the patrons all the good qualities were lavished on the subject of the poem in the most extravagant terms. Some of the Qasidas show considerable literary skill and mastery of versification. Stiff metres and difficult rhymes were attempted to show off their dexterity and ability. Figures of speech and tropes were freely indulged in.

Masnavis.

The Masnavis are also favourite compositions with the poets. They follow the rules of Persian prosody and obey the canons laid down by Persian masters. They are said to supply the place of an epic and drama but fall very short of the requirements of those two great forms of literature. The most notable Masnavi-writers in Urdu are Mir, Mir Hasan, Momin, Naseem, Qalaq, Nawab Mirza Shauq and Shauq Qidwai. The best Masnavis are *Sihar-ul-Bayan* and *Gulzar-i-Naseem*. "Even in the Masnavi or narrative poems, the story usually is quite a subordinate matter; it has in most cases been handled, time after time, and is familiar to the reader in its minutest detail. Even when the names chosen for the actors are new, the intrigue is old and the mode in which it is unfolded, is the only thing which distinguishes one poem from another. The descriptions thus confined within a narrow circle of incident and epithet repeat each other with great monotony"..........It is urged that these Masnavis fulfil the want of Drama in Urdu but a mere knowledge of the essentials of drama would disclose that Masnavis do not even mean an approach to it. There is no characterisation, no plot architecture, no working up of situations, and little of that brilliant dialogue which is the life of dramas. The movement is slow and there is little or no action. Urdu Masnavis are more or less stereotyped and conventional. There is no counterpart of Firdausi's Shah Namah or Nizami's Sikandarnamah. *Siharulbayan* is however very eloquent and has many good points and *Gulzar Naseem* is very clever and a creditable performance in Urdu literature.

Marsias.

The Marsias are one of the redeeming features of Urdu literature. They contain landscape poems although nature serves only as a background. There are graphic pictures of battles and fights. They are excellent narrative poems full of fire and eloquence. Their achievements and services to Urdu literature are discussed in detail in a subsequent chapter.

Qita and Rubai.

The Qitas and Rubais have not commanded the same attention as Ghazals. They are often didactic in character full of noble sentiments and great thoughts. Every great writer has written Rubais. The Rubais of Anis, Dabir and Hali are the most noted.

Some peculiar features. The relation of pupil to master.

The relation of Ustad (poetical preceptor) and Shagird (pupil) is unique in Urdu literature. Early compositions of the poets were regularly corrected and the poets were uniformly drilled in the art of writing verse. Urdu poets are linked in a vast chain of relationship. It behoved the pupil to carry on the style and particular canons of his poetical master and it was considered wrong to deviate from them. This often led to the domination of form over ideas and helped to pin Urdu poetry to conventionality. Sometimes a master-spirit freed itself and shot forth into brilliance.

Mushairas.

Symposiums or *Mushairas* were literary arenas where poems on a set refrain or otherwise, were recited to the admiration and applause of fellow poets and enthusiastic listeners. These were a sort of poetical contests and helped much to popularise Urdu poetry. No such institution is known to Europe.

Takhullus.

In accordance with the custom of Persian poets Urdu poets select a *nom de poete* and they are generally known to the poetic world by their self-chosen *soubriquet*. Sometimes this poetical surname is selected by the Ustad and bestowed on the pupil.

Appreciation of Urdu poetry at its best. Its emotional character.

Urdu poetry, however, with all its limitations and at its best is sublimely emotional and makes a powerful appeal to sentiment. It is very sweet and subtle and is pre-eminent in its special sphere. It is steeped in love. The songs of sorrow, the wailings of hopeless love, the utter despair of unrealized desire, the poignant grief at the departure of the beloved, are soul-stirring and make an appeal at once strong and effective. There are gems scattered throughout Urdu poetry which can compare favourably with the best of English literature or for the matter of that, with any literature of the world, in the loftiness of thought, in the delicacy of emotion, in melody and rhythm, in richness of imagery, and in the haunting quality which is the hall-mark of genuine poetry. There is much that is useless, base and tinsel in Urdu poetry but so it is in all the literatures of the world. Urdu poetry and prose has had a short life. The leaven of modern culture and western learning has acted beneficially. Urdu poetry now boasts of natural songs, pastorals, landscape poems and translations of foreign poems. There is a wholesome departure from the beaten ruts and worn out grooves of old Urdu poetry. There is a splendid future for Urdu poetry as people who are equipped with the cultures of East and West have begun to take an active interest in its activities.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DECCAN SCHOOL OF EARLY URDU POETRY.

It is a remarkable fact that Urdu poetry first blossomed in the Musulman Courts of Deccan princes in a dialect called Dakhini. Before examining the causes of such a phenomenon it would be better to understand what Dakhini is, and how it is generally distinguished from Urdu.

What is Dakhini?

Dakhini is the form of Hindustani used by Musulmans in the Deccan. Like Urdu it is written in Persian character but is much more free from Persianization. It has certain peculiarities. The Muhammadan armies carried vernacular to the South before it was standardized and it then contained many idioms which are now excluded from literary prose. The contact with the surrounding dialects, Marathi, Tamil, and Telegu affected the idiom and construction to a certain extent. It does not use the agent case with 'ne' before transitive verbs in the past tense as is the characteristic feature of all the dialects of western Hindi. It employs the oblique genitive, as a base for declension in phrases like 'mere ko', where the standard would be 'mujh ko.' These and certain other peculiarities and idioms were taken to Northern India where in course of time they disappeared under the gradual process of consolidation of language. It is therefore incorrect to regard Dakhini as corrupt literary Urdu. It is only a variation of Urdu which received cultivation in the Courts of Bijapur and Golcunda and was raised to the dignity of a literary language by Wali whose example was followed by writers in the North.

Causes of the rise of Urdu Poetry in the Deccan.

It is interesting to trace the reasons which led to the phenomenal rise of Urdu poetry in the Deccan. It would have been natural to expect that Urdu poetry would start its career in its home—Delhi. Instead, we find the centre of poetic activities in the Deccan so remotely situated from its cradle. What is the reason of this? No attempt has yet been made to answer this all-important question and to explain this phenomenon a reference to the history of that period of the Deccan would be necessary. The founder of the Bahmani Kingdom was a devoted disciple of a Brahman named Gangoo. When he ascended the throne he not only assumed the name of his guru in token of reverence but made Gangoo his revenue Minister. ("It is generally believed that Gangoo was the first Brahman who accepted office in the service of a Mahomedan Prince; before whose time the Brahmins were not engaged in public affairs but passed their lives in the duties of religion.........

The employment of Hindus in the Revenue department and the accounts which were kept in Persian were now kept in Hindi.

Since Gangoo's acceptance of employment, the management of the revenue has been committed generally to Brahmins by all the princes in the Deccan."[1] The employment of Hindus in the revenue department resulted in the rapid development of the language and indicated the friendly relations subsisting between the two communities. Ibrahim Adil Shah enlisted Deccanis instead of foreigners in his service and by his order "the public accounts formerly kept in Persian were now written in Hindoy (Hindi) under the management of the Brahmins who soon acquired great influence in his Government."[2] This was a great triumph for the vernacular which now became the language of office and consequently made considerable progress. The Hindus were no negligible quantity in the South and consequently the numerous intrigues and fights for supremacy of the Mahomedan rulers called in the aid of the powerful Hindu princes. Sometimes they were won over by one party, at other times they were conciliated by a rival faction and persuaded to form a coalition against a dangerous and aggressive neighbour. Occasionally the Mahomedans combined against the Hindu Chief. These manœuvres and diplomatic relations fostered intercourse between Hindus and Mahomedans which benefited the vernacular not a little. "There can be no doubt that during the three hundred years of independence of Golcunda and Bijapur there was a far closer intercourse between the two races (Hindus and Mahomedans) than existed elsewhere in India. There seems not only a mutual toleration but a strong affection between the Hindu subjects on the one hand and the Mahomedan rulers on the other, which was weakened only towards the decline of the Beejapur Kingdom by unnecessary cruelty towards the rising power of the Mahrattas."[3] So cordial was the relationship that Mahomedan princes and noblemen in the Deccan used to marry Hindu wives and Hindu princes did not scruple to Mahomedan wives. It was due to the policy of toleration that so many Hindus were appointed in the administration. Though there were internecine wars, yet the Sultans of Gujerat and the Bahmani kings had far more opportunities for consolidation and peaceful development than the rulers at Delhi which witnessed intermittent but frequent irruptions from the North.

The close relations of Mohammadans with Hindus.

The policy of toleration practised.

(The cordial relations subsisting between Hindus and Mahomedans, the employment of a large number of Hindus in the State service, the use of the vernacular for keeping accounts and

(1) Brigg's Ferishta, Volume II, page 292, Edition 1909.
(2) *Ibid*, Volume III, page 80, " "
(3) Gribble's History of the Deccan, Volume I, page 294, Note.

records, the general policy of toleration that was practised, all these factors combined tended to consolidate and develop the vernacular, Dakhini, and to raise it into importance and make it a fit medium for literature. The presence of the Sufis in Southern India who disregarded all distinctions of creed and language generally favoured the vernacular by which they could reach all classes. Most of the early poets were Sufis and they composed their songs in the language of the people.)

The influence of Sufis on the Dakhini language.

The curtain has only partially been raised on the history of Urdu poetry of this period. The accounts of the writers are fragmentary.. There is no contemporary Tazkirah to throw light on the writers of this age. Only a few names are known and a small portion of their writings is available in the few chronicles composed many years after, which have fortunately been preserved. The literary interest has just been awakened and with the lapse of time much will be brought to light by the patient research of enthusiastic scholars. The first writer of Urdu poetry of any note is Shujauddin Nuri, a native of Gujerat, a friend of Faizi and a contemporary of Akbar. He was the tutor of the son of the Wazir of Sultan Abul Husan Kutab Shah of Golcunda. A few verses, said to be his, are preserved in old Tazkiras especially in that of Qaim. They are noted not for their poetic merit but for their historical interest.

The imperfect and fragmentary account of this period.

Shujauddin Nuri of Gujerat.

The kings of Golcunda and Bijapur were men of refinement and culture. They not only patronised literary men but were themselves writers of creditable verses, both in Persian and Dakhini, as Urdu was called in the South. The savants who gathered at their courts were all scholars of Persian, and Persian as the literary language of Mohammadans was cultivated in their courts. The new vernacular was surrounded by alien dialects, Telegu, Marhathi and Canarese, from whom it could not seek any inspiration. Being in the hands of Persian scholars of Mohammadan ruling Courts, and having no powerful influence to counteract the effect of Persianization, the new vernacular naturally modelled itself upon Persian.

Why Dakhini succumbed to the influence of Persian?

Golcunda was the intellectual resort of literary men. The kingdom, being founded in 1518 A. D., attained to great heights of prosperity and success. Sultan Quli Qutb Shah II who is also called Quli Qutb Shah was the son of Ibrahim Qutb Shah upon whose death in 1581 A. D. he ascended the throne in his twelfth year. In 1587 A. D. he concluded peace with Adil Shah of Bijapur and gave his sister in marriage to him. He was a contemporary of Akbar and Shah Abbas of Persia. The latter

The court of Golcunda Sultan Mahomed Quli Qutb Shah (1580-1611 A. D.).

emperor courted his alliance by asking his daughter in marriage for one of his sons, and Qutb Shah esteeming the connection with so great a monarch as an honour complied with his request. He founded a city at about 8 miles from Golcunda which he called Bhagnagar after his mistress Bhagmati, a celebrated courtezan; but being afterwards ashamed of his *amour* he changed the name to Hyderabad the present capital of the Nizams. He was extremely fond of literature and fine arts. He loved architecture and constructed many buildings, the most notable being Khudad Mahal, and Bargah-i-Khusravi. Scholarship and arts flourished and poets and men of letters were attracted to his court from Persia and Arabia by his munificence. He had a fixed time when he held literary discussions and reunions. Calligraphy attained to a great height and famous calligraphists from Persia and Iraq assembled at Hyderabad. The most famous scholars at his courts were Mir Mahommed Momin Astrabadi and Mir Jumla. He was very fond of religious discussions and always tried hard to promote the advancement of Shia faith which had been adopted by the founder of the dynasty in Golcunda. This devotion to Shiaism led to the composition of many Marsias.

A scholar, a poet and a patron of art and literature.

This Sultan was not only a beneficent patron of art and literature but was a writer of verses of no mean order. He has written in Dakhini, Persian and Telegu. He has left a voluminous kuliyat running to more than 1,800 pages. Mahommad Quli Qutb Shah adopted the *nom de plume* 'Qutb Shah' in Persian and Muani, 'Spiritual' in Dakhini. His kuliyat consists of many varieties of composition. They are in following order masnavis, qasidas, tarjihbands, Persian marsias, dakhni marsias and rubiyats. From the introduction it appears that Sultan Mahommed Quli Qutb Shah wrote 50,000 verses.

Simplicity and sweetness are the predominant notes of his poems. Sufism and love are the two powerful themes that govern his poetry. He does not confine himself to these alone. He enlarges his field and writes on human society and the beauties of Nature and in this he foreshadows Souda and Nazeer Akbarabadi. There are many masnavis on fruits which are purely Indian. There is a masnavi on Indian vegetables, and one on game birds found in India. There are many poems on customs and manners such as those observed at marriages, or on birth-days; on festivals of Hindus and Mahomedans such as, Holi, Diwali, Shabbarat, Id, Milad-i-Nabi, Basant; on general subjects such as the elephant and the rainy season of India. There is an interesting dialogue in poetry between a goblet and a decanter of wine. He has written a Qasida in praise of Bagh Mahommad Shahi and has many poems in praise of God, the Prophet and his companions. He is also the author of many touching Marsias on the tragedy of Karbala.

Quli Qutb Shah is the first great writer of Urdu poetry whose works are extant. The language shows considerable development and consolidation and it is probable that many other writers must have preceded him but their works have not seen the light of day. There are religious masnavis anterior to the time of Quli Qutb Shah but they are not literary in any sense. It is for the first time that Qutb Shah's works disclose literary merit. He is the first to write in the style of Persians and to collect a Divan in alphabetical order after their manner—an honour hitherto assigned to Wali. He not only practised the usual forms of compositions but shows originality and highly developed taste in writing about subjects of local interest. He has not wholly succumbed to the influence of Persian as Hindi influence is very clearly discernible in his works. He uses Hindi words and constructions in profusion, employs local colour, seeks for similes and metaphors relating to India, Hindicizes Persian words and constructions, uses Hindi epithets in praise of God; refers to Hindu heroes and Indian legends borrowed from Hindu epics; celebrates the love of a woman for a man. There is no perversion of taste in the mode of address as found later on in Urdu poetry. Persian is not forgotten. It lent to him the prosody, the forms of composition, vocabulary, idioms, constructions, themes, similes and metaphors. He is not a pedant and uses Arabic and Persian words as they are commonly spoken and does not care to see whether they are etymologically correct or not. The archaic character of the language and quaint Indian constructions and words long fallen into disuse deter people from reading Dakhini poetry and it will be some time before Qutb Shah comes into his own.

Characteristics of his works in Dakhini.

Influence of Hindi.

Qutb Shah is the first literary figure of great importance to write copiously and well, who demonstrated the capacity of Urdu as a literary language and who laid the foundations of a noble literature and who foreshadowed the advent of greater people and as such is worthy to be ranked with the great fathers of Urdu poetry.

His position as a poet.

Sultan Mahommad Qutb Shah was nephew and successor of Sultan Quli Qutb Shah. He was born in Golcunda in 1591 A.D. and was married to his cousin, the daughter of Sultan Quli Qutb Shah. He was an extremely religious man, living his life according to his faith and very liberal and fond of architecture. Amongst other things he built Imarat Ilahi Mahal, Jama Musjid better known as Mecca Masjid, Muhammadi Mahal, Dal Mahal, etc. He was a brilliant writer of verse and prose and composed both in Persian and Dakhini. He has left two Diwans one in Dakhini and another in Persian which contain all varieties of poetic forms. He adopted

Sultan Mahommad Qutb Shah (1611-1625 A.D.).

the poetical appellation of 'Zilallah' or 'shadow of God' in Persian and Qutb Shah in Urdu. The latter *nom de guerre* has caused some confusion for his predecessor Quli Qutb Shah also adopted it but he did so only in Persian. Both of his Diwans are preserved in the library of Nawab Sir Salar Jung at Hyderabad. His verses are marked by sweetness of diction, simplicity, and gracefulness of style.

Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah (1625-1674 A. D).

Abdulla Qutb Shah was the son of Sultan Mohammad Qutb Shah and was the sixth Sultan of the Qutb Shahi dynasty of Golcunda at Hyderabad. Born in 1614 A.D. he ascended the throne of his father after his death in 1625 A.D. He acknowledged himself a tributary of Shah Jehan and purchased his protection by paying an annual sum. In 1656 A.D. he incurred the displeasure of that sovereign and prince Aurangzeb, then governor of the imperial territories in the Deccan, enraged at his conduct, marched to Hyderabad which he took and plundered. Abdulla had to yield and accepted humiliating terms and from that time he remained in fact a vassal of the Moghul Empire. He was however a great patron of fine arts and literature and had a passion for building palaces. Scholars and erudite persons from Persia and Arabia congregated at his court, whom he rewarded with great liberality. Many of these men of letters dedicated their works such as the Burhan Qata and the Lughaat Farsi or Persian lexicon to him. He wrote verses both in Persian and Dakhini and adopted the pen-name of Abdulla in his writings. He has left Diwans in Rekhta and Persian. His verses are fluent and sweet. Asaafi Malkapuri has quoted many of his Dakhini verses in his '*Tazkirah Shaurai Dakhin.*'

Ibn Nishati.

An important Dakhini poet flourished during his time—Ibn Nishati. Nothing is known about his life except that he is the author of a charming Masnavi in Dakhini entitled *Phulban* (garden). "This is a fairy tale of love and adventure, is named after its heroine and is said to be a translation of a Persian work entitled the *Basatin*. It deals with Alexander and Lochman and describes the fabulous town *Kanchan Patan* "city of gold" as a land of Cockaigne in the East. A manuscript of this work is preserved in the East India House about 130 pages long."

Ghawasi's Romance of Saif-ul-mulųk, 1035 A. H.

Ghawasi wrote the romance of Saif-ul-muluk, the son of the king of Egypt and Badi-ul-Jamal, the princess of China. The author who is only known by the above *nom de plume* was a Shiah poet and flourished at the court of Abdulla Qutb Shah. This popular romance is probably adopted from the Persian version of one of the Arabian Nights tales. The prologue contains poems in praise of God, Mahommad the Prophet, the four Caliphs, saints and the

reigning king of Golcunda. The poet introduces his name in the eighteenth couplet of the first poem. He is also the author of a masnavi called *Tutinamah* or tales of a parrot wrongly attributed by Sir Charles Lyall to Ibn Nishati. These tales were translated from the Persian *Tutinamah* of Ziyai Nakhshbi during the reign of Sultan Abdulla Qutb Shah. The prologue contains a long eulogy of this sovereign. It is ultimately derived from the Sanskrit original entitled *Suka Saptati.* In its turn it furnished material for the work of Haidar Bakhsh, one of the pioneers of the Fort William School, who wrote his famous Tutinamah in 1801 A.D. Ghawasi has introduced his poetic name in the body of this Masnavi in a distich which is repeated at the end of each tale. The date of composition as stated in the epilogue is 1639 A.D. (1st Rajjab A. H. 1049). Mention must also be made of an important work in old Deccani prose—*Sabras*—by Maulana Wajhai who flourished during the time of Sultan Abdulla Qutb Shah and basked in the sunshine of his favours. He was a contemporary of Ghawasi. *Sabras* was written about 1040 A. H. or 1045 A. H. at the order of Sultan Abdulla Qutb Shah. Specimens of old Deccani prose earlier than *Sabras* could be found and are still extant but they appertain more or less to the domain of religion or Sufism. The outstanding features of the book as mentioned by Moulvi Abdul Haq who ushered it in to public notice are that the book contains one long continuous story, that it has literary merits and that it is written in rhyming prose, in which the influence of Zahuri is clearly discernible. The treatment is quite simple and the narrative is clear and flowing. The plot is very thin and is used only as a peg on which to hang dissertations on love, reason, bravery, avarice, the Elixir of Life and the like. The language used is the same as found in the Deccani Kuliyats of the Qutb Shahi kings.

Masnavi of Tutinamah, 1049 A. H. (1639 A. D.).

Sabras. A book of old Deccani prose by Maulana Wajhai. Composed about 1040 A. H. or 1045 A. H.

Tahsinuddin which may be a proper name or an honorific title, wrote a masnavi entitled 'Qissai Kamrup-o-Kala' about the same time. Kala, the heroine, is the daughter of the king of Ceylon and Kamrup, the hero, is the son of the king of Oudh. They dream of each other and instantaneously fall in love as in the story of the princess of China in the Arabian Nights. Kamrup goes out to find the lady of his dream and after numerous adventures and wanderings in strange countries he meets his love and is happily married to her. It is remarkable that though the work is of a Mahomedan, the personages of the story are Hindus. This Masnavi is published by Garcin de Tassy in 1836 A.D. under the title of the Adventures of Kamrup. It is interesting to note that the famous

Tahsinuddin.

German poet Goethe read an exact translation of this poem and said that it gave him infinite pleasure.

Abul Hasan Qutb Shah (1674-1687 A.D., died 1704 A. D.).

The last king of Golcunda though pleasure-loving and indolent was a man of culture, a patron of scholars, and a poet. His literary name was Tana Shah. Only one verse is said to survive him and is quoted by Lutf in his Tazkira called *Gulshan-i-Hind.* He was the son-in-law of Abdulla Qutb Shah, after whose demise he succeeded to the throne. Golcunda was conquered by Aurangzeb after a siege of seven months in 1687 A. D. and reduced to a province of the Moghul Empire. Abul Hasan was taken prisoner and ended his life in captivity. He was much addicted to smoking and craved permission to indulge in his favourite habit in his confinement.

Tabai's Qissai Behram and Gulbadan. 1670 A.D.

At his court flourished many poets and one of them was Tabai who wrote a Masnavi entitled Qissai-Behram o Gulbadan, a fairy story adopted from the Persian. Nothing is known of the author. It contains about 1340 distichs and was composed in 1670-71 A.D. The work is dedicated to Shah Abul Hasan of Golcunda.

Court of Bijapur. Ibrahim Adil Shah II. (1580-1626 A. D.).

The court of Bijapur was similarly cultured, brilliant and noted for its lavish patronage of literature. Ibrahim Adil Shah II had great taste for architecture and for the company of literary men. One of the greatest poets of Persian, Mulla Zahuri who arrived at Bijapur in 1580 A. D. and died in 1616 A. D. achieved great fame at his court. He dedicated two of his works *Khawan-i-Khalil* and *Gulzar-i-Ibrahim* to Ibrahim Adil Shah and wrote three prefaces to *Nauras* of Ibrahim Adil Shah which are regarded as masterpieces of Persian prose style. Mir Sanjar and Malak Qami who were Persian poets also lived at his court. Ibrahim Adil Shah wrote a work on music in Hindi verse and called it *Nauras.*

Zahuri died 1616 A.D.

Ali Adil Shah II (1656-1672 A. D.)

Ali Adil Shah II of Bijapur also entertained celebrities in literature at his court. The peace of his reign was disturbed by the rising of the celebrated Mahratta chief Shivaji who captured many strongholds belonging to Bijapur and killed Afzal Khan, the Bijapur general. During his reign (1656-1672 A. D.) flourished a celebrated poet called Nasrati (victorious). His name was Mahommad Nasrat. He was related to the ruler of Carnatic but led the simple, abstemious and wandering life of a durwesh. From Carnatic where he lived for a long time, he came to Bijapur, was made a mansabdar at the court of Ali Adil Shah II, and became a favourite and associate of the king. In 1076 A. H., or

Nasrati.

Ali Namah 1665 A. D. 1665 A. D. he wrote a long Masnavi or a heroic poem entitled *Ali Namah*, a historical account of the reign of Ali Adil Shah II, containing an eulogy of that sovereign under whom he lived and served. The book comprises a few Qasidas and Matlas, all laudatory in character. This is the first poem in Dakhini which is written in panegyric of a King. Ali Adil Shah rewarded Nasrati by bestowing on him the title of poet-laureate a rank which he deserved for his excellent verses. He composed another Masnavi in Dakhini verse called *Gulshan-i-Ishq*, or garden of love in 1068 A. H. (1657 A. D.), a story celebrating the love of Kunwar Manohar, son of Suraj Bhanu, and Madh Malti. This story has extensively been handled by various writers in the approved conventional style, and many versions of it are still extant. The romance is preceded by a long prologue in which is an eulogy of the author's patron. He also wrote *Guldasta-i-Ishq* (bouquet of love) between 1650 and 1670 A. D., a collection of Dakhini odes and amatory poems which he dedicated to his patron, the Sultan. Nasrati died in 1075 A. H. (1685 A. D.). It is doubtful if he was a Brahman as stated by Sir Charles Lyall. He was a Sunni and a disciple of the family of Shah Bandanawaz Gesu-daraz. He eulogises the saint in one of his verses. He was a graceful writer of verses and though his language is very archaic and not easy of understanding yet his poems have sweetness, flow and melody.

Gulshan-i-Ishq, (1657 A. D.)

Guldasta-i-Ishq (1650-70 A. D.)

A contemporary of Nasrati who lived and wrote in the time of Ali Adil Shah II, was Hashmi the pseudonym of Shah Hashim of Bijapur. He had the misfortune to be born blind but was very quick-witted and composed graceful poems in Hindi. He rendered the story of Yusuf and Zuleikha in Dakhini verse. The influence of Bhasha is clearly discernible in his writings as he frequently employs ahyam or double-meaning and celebrates the love of woman for a man contrary to the style of Persian poetry. Germs of Rekhti are also found in his verses. He died in 1190 A. H. (1679 A. D.).

Hashmi died 1679 A. D.

Amongst other poets of the Deccan a mention may be made of Daulat who in 1640 A. D. wrote *Qissai Shah Bahram-o-Banu-Hasan*, the story of Bahman, king of Persia and the fairy Banu, a masnavi dealing with strange adventures of Bahram Gor in the city of Deo Safed (white demon) and his falling in love with, and eventually marrying Banu Hasan, a fairy who used to frequent the palace gardens. Faiz of whom nothing is known was the author of the story of Razwan Shah, prince of China, and the fairy princess Ruh Afza. This masnavi was completed in 1094 A. H. (1683 A. D.), and is an adaptation of a Persian work in prose.

Daulat.

Faiz.

Minor and unimportant poets.

There is a long list of minor and unimportant poets mentioned by the various writers of tazkiras. No verse is quoted from them and very often the mention is limited to the *nom de plume* of the poet. It is of no practical use to recount the names of all of them. Ahmad of Gujerat, Saadi of Deccan who was confounded with the Saadi of Persia, Fazal, Ashiq, Amir and Azad may however be mentioned.

Wali, the father of Urdu poetry (1668-1744 A. D.)

The towering personality of this age, however, is Wali, whom fitly denominated Baba-i-rekhta (the father of Urdu poetry), the Urdu Chaucer with whom Urdu poetry takes a definite start. His claim to be the first to compile a diwan in Urdu in the style of Persian poets, as advocated by Azad and other earlier writers cannot be supported in view of the collections of poems left by the Qutb Shahi Kings of Golcunda. This fact however does not detract much from his fame. The impulse that he gave to Urdu poetry was powerful and lasting. Even in the succeeding generation, his position in Urdu poetry is recognised by such poets of eminence and repute as Mir Qasim and his contemporary Hatim. All have paid their tributes to his genius and his achievements.

Confusion about his name.

There is some confusion about his name. According to some his name is Mahommad Shamsuddin and his poetical name is Wali. According to others it is Mahommad Wali, with Shamsuddin as an honorific title and Wali as a poetical surname. Blumhardt thinks it is Shah Waliullah. Azad calls him Shams Waliullah. These variations and differences are due to the fact that there was a saintly personage of the name of Shams Walliullah at Ahmedabad and writers frequently confounded the saint with the poet.

Controversial matters regarding place of birth and ancestry.

It is incorrect to state that Wali was born at Ahmedabad as is maintained by Garcin de Tassy, Blumhardt and Mir Hasan in his tazkira. He was born at Aurangabad in the Deccan in 1079 A. H. (1668 A. D.) as is borne out by recent researches thus confirming Mir Taqi's statement in his tazkira. It is again a mistake to connect him by birth with Shah Wajihuddin Alvi, as he is descended from the Qadria Sheikhs of Aurangabad. He was however a religious pupil of the saint and the qasidas and tarjih-bands which Wali has written in his praise express only the reverence and veneration of the disciple for his pir. There is no mention of Wali in the list of the descendants of Shah Wajihuddin. Internal evidence of his works also proves conclusively that he was a Gujerati by birth and ancestry as he himself proclaims himself to be a Dakhini in his verses and uses words and idioms peculiar to Dakhini. It has been sought to fortify the argument of his being a native of Gujerat by quoting the qasida in which he describes his anguish on his separation from Gujerat but it is apparent that he regrets the

absence as a traveller and not as a native. His masnavi in praise of Surat does not necessarily point to his Gujerati origin.

His life.

Brought up at Aurangabad, he studied there up to the age of twenty (1688 A. D.) and then went to Ahmedabad which was a famous centre of learning. The madrasah or academy of Maulana Wajihuddin Alvi Gujerati attracted students and scholars from different and distant places. Wali enrolled himself as a pupil and after some years he became a religious disciple of the saint. After a short while he returned back to his native place and abandoned himself to the study of poets with great zeal and fervour. He himself began to compose poems, his own genius having been kindled by his extensive readings. He wrote ghazals, qasidas, masnavis, mustzad, mukhammasat, rubaiyat, qitaat and tarjihbands. Wali went to Ahmedabad and showed the collection of verses to his friends and Gujerati poets who admired it exceedingly, and his verses evoked great praise and appreciation.

His Urdu Diwan.

Two visits to Delhi 1700 A. D. and 1722 A.D.

Wali is said to have visited Delhi twice, once in A. D. 1700 (A. H. 1112) during the reign of Emperor Aurangzebe when he attracted some attention and was advised by Shah Saadullah Gulshan, the well known sufi and Persian poet of his age at Delhi, to compile a rekhta diwan after the manner of the Persian poets. It is not at all certain whether he became his pupil in poetry but he was initiated by him in sufism. Wali came back to Ahmedabad where he had formed an ardent attachment for one Syed Abulmuaani and had been his constant attendant. The Syed resolved to visit the saints and shrines of Delhi and Sirhind. Wali accompanied him to Delhi in the third year of the reign of the Emperor Mohammad Shah A. D 1722 (A. H. 1134) (1). He had the diwan with him which leapt into instant fame. Its appreciation was universal and enthusiasm for his verses spread like wild fire. His ghazals were sung in courts, in bazaars, in streets, in banquet halls and sufistic assemblies of saints. His contemporaries hailed them with delight and his verses became the craze of the city. The poets who had hitherto confined their efforts to Persian betook themselves to the charming vernacular, followed Wali and began to compile diwans in Urdu. It was at the instance of Saadullah Gulshan, his religious preceptor, that Wali substituted the Urdu idiom for the Dakhini one in many of his ghazals.

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(1) Beale in his Oriental Biographical Dictionary states that Wali took his Diwan to Delhi in 1720 A. D. (1132 A. H.) but he does not give any authority for his statement

After some time he returned to Ahmedabad and after a short sojourn there, he went back to Aurangabad. In 1141 A. H. (1730 A. D.) he compiled a book entitled Dah Majlis in commemoration of the martyrs of Karbala. It is a voluminous work and is written in the pure Dakhini dialect and idiom. It was rendered into prose by one Fazli whose work outstripped the original in fame. He is also said by the author of Gulshan-i-Hind to have compiled a diwan in Hindi. Wali again went to Gujerat and died in Ahmedabad in 1155 A. H. (1744 A. D.) and lies buried there.

Dah Majlis.

Death, 1744 A. D.

Wali had numerous friends to whom he was sincerely and devotedly attached. Lala Khemdas of Aurangabad, Syed Abul Maani of Ahmedabad, Amratlal, Gohar Lal, and Mahammad Yar Khan of Delhi are all fitly celebrated in his verses. He had no sectarian prejudices and was broad in his sympathies. In the matter of his faith he was between the Imamians and the Sunnis, but there is no trace of bigotry. The immoderate praises he showers on Ali might lead us to think that he was a Shiah. He was also essentially mystic or spiritualistic and might be compared to Hafiz for like him under the appearance of levity and licentiousness he unveils the system of Mahomedan sufis with the aid of allegories, metaphors and allusions though occasionally he speaks openly without their adventitious aid. He was a great rover and he seems to have visited many places. It is not quite sure whether he visited the distant province of Bengal as Garcin de Tassy would make us believe by quoting a verse referring to the beauties of Bengal. He must have visited Satara as Satara, Delhi and Surat find mention in his verses. He knew the arts of Europe. 'European paintings,' he says, 'are ravished with astonishment in seeing thy face...the shame of the land of the Deccanies.' He was a passionate lover of beauty in nature and human beings and it is fitly described in his verses.

Wali's friendships and religion.

His sufism.

Wali preserved the independence of a true poet and a saint because no prince or minister is eulogistically mentioned in his verses. He was however not free from the egoism and vanity of the poets for he has indulged in self laudatory verses and had his flings at his contemporaries and predecessors. This may have been conventional as it is customary with the Persian poets to exalt their own poetic powers.

His independence of character.

His works are interesting both for themselves and for the language. His style is easy and elegant. He served as a model to Urdu poets and his diwan laid and strengthened the foundations of Urdu poetry in

His style.

Northern India. Simplicity and melody are his keynotes. His verses are eloquent, flowing, and spontaneous and have no signs of labour. They are not overlaid with excessive ornaments and figures of speech. There is little of conceit about them. His diction is sweet and chaste. Many of his verses do not show any archaism which would have been natural to expect in an old poet, and are wonderfully modern. Truly he is the 'Adam of Urdu poetry.'

CHAPTER V.

THE DELHI SCHOOL OF URDU POETS, PART I

THE AGE OF ARZU AND HATIM.

The early writers.

The impulse given by Wali did not exhaust itself but was taken up by the enthusiasts at Delhi, who had hitherto devoted themselves to the compositions of Persian poems in approved style. Abru, Hatim, Naji, Mazmun, and Mazhar were contemporaries of Wali and pioneers of Urdu poetry. They are regarded as the early fathers of the rekhta, who nursed and reared the newly found babe.

Service to the poetic diction and language.

This period saw a great consolidation of the language. Poetic diction was not fixed. The language was still in a fluid state for poetic purposes. There were many archaic and uncouth words which had been a legacy from the Deccan. There were Dakhini idioms and constructions which had found currency with the Diwan of Wali. These early writers had therefore an important and difficult task to perform and they acquitted themselves with credit. It called forth sedulous care and excellent taste. It is true that they failed to see the beauty of Bhasha words and sacrificed them for those of foreign origin. But they displayed great discrimination in discarding obsolete words and they replaced ungainly idioms and cumbersome constructions with more elegant and refined ones which they invariably borrowed from the Persian of which they were masters. The language was plastic and it readily assimilated all that was imported in it.

Ahyam or double meaning.

The contemporaries of Wali continued to employ very largely the figure of speech called ahyam or double meaning which has been explained before. This ahyam is a heritage of the Bhasha poetry where it is the soul of its 'dohras' or couplets. The diwans of these early writers teem with this particular kind of device. It was the work of Mazhar, Souda and Mir to expel it from Urdu poetry and to model their verses closely on the Persian.

Sufism.

Another characteristic of the age was that Urdu poetry was largely dominated by sufism. It was in the air. Most of the early poets were dervishes, or laymen who became fakirs towards the close of their lives. It was the age of the murshid and shagird, of the religious pir and disciple. Persian poetry had, in its last phase, developed an inordinate tendency towards sufism and Urdu poetry humbly copied it. The sufism of Persian poetry and the trend of the age coupled with the dervish character of early poets combined to give Urdu poetry a distinct sufistic tendency.

The writers of the age were also mostly soldiers. This profession was common for it was the time of constant invasions and turmoil, of weak Governments, when there was no safety of life and property and when the profession of arms brought honour, security and profit.

Early Urdu poets mostly soldiers.

Another characteristic of this period is that most of the poets do not maintain the same level of excellence in their compositions. Some of the couplets in a ghazal would be exceedingly fine and others would be of very low order. It was also the tendency of the age to use low and obscure words probably because rekhta was not taken too seriously and was regarded as a pastime, a sort of relaxation. Abru, Ḥatim, Naji, Mazhar have all written verses which offend good taste. Even Souda and Mir have used words especially when railing against the sheikh, zahid, and nasah (preacher) which cannot now be pronounced without a blush.

No uniform level of excellence and presence of indecent words and verses.

Rekhta versification had not attained any degree of perfection. The rules of prosody were not rigidly adhered to. Qafia so essential later on, could be dispensed with. Radif was given a scant attention and rules about it were not strictly conformed to. There is a certain looseness about the verses and padding with superfluous words, which would shock a modern ear attuned to modern harmonies, is common and frequent. The style of the early writers is characterized by simplicity and elegance.

Art of versification, technique and style.

Abru was the poetical name of Shah Najamuddin of Delhi alias Shah Mubarak who flourished in the reign of Mohammad Shah. The date of his birth is not known. He was one of the grandsons of Sheikh Mohammad Ghos the celebrated saint of Gwalior, and was born, it appears, at Gwalior. While young he went to Delhi where he learnt the art of composing verses. He is the author of a diwan of Urdu verses which was much appreciated for its ingenious allegories but was lost at the time of Mutiny and is not extant now. He also wrote a Masnavi called *Muaazai Araish-i-Mashuq* (Indications of the Charms of a Beloved). He sometimes lived at Narnaul and was deprived of an eye. He was a man of very amiable character. He had tiffs with Mazhar who unchivalrously often alluded to his defect of the eye. He was fondly attached to one Pir Makkhan, son of Shah Kamaluddin Bukhari who also was a poet of some rank. Abru frequently introduces him in his verses. Mir, Hasan, Mushaffi, Fatah Ali and Lutf, the contemporary biographers speak well of him and his poetical powers. He is one of the early writers of Urdu poetry. He was excessively fond of similes and double meanings. He was not

Abru, died 1750 A. D.

a very erudite scholar but had enough learning. He died in 1161 A. H. (1750 A. D.) when he was over 50 years of age.

Sirajuddin Ali Khan poetically surnamed Arzu, known also under the name of Khan Saheb, was the son of Sheikh Hisamuddin Hisam and was one of the most celebrated poets and scholars of Hindustan. Mir Taqi says that there was nobody in his time more learned and eloquent. Mir Hasan regards him as the greatest man after Amir Khusru. Lutf pays his meed of praise and Fatah Ali Husain calls him the 'lamp of the assembly of eloquence' playing on the word Siraj, which means a lamp. Azad pays him the compliment of being the Aristotle of Urdu poetry and Mir speaks very reverently of his master and regards him as the teacher of the Urdu poets. He is, however more an influence than a poet of Urdu, in which language he composed casually. His position however is assured as he is the recognized master of such writers as Mir, Sauda, Mazhar and Dard. He was a native of Agra and a descendant of Sheikh Mahommad Ghos of Gwalior. He commenced composing verses very early and read copiously and extensively. He was enrolled as a mansabdar and went to Gwalior to take up the appointment but came back in 1130 A. H. (1718 A. D.) in the time of Farrukh Siyyar. In 1147 A. H. (1734 A. D.) Sheikh Mahommad Ali Hazin came from Persia to Delhi and everybody wanted to know this distinguished scholar and poet. Arzu however did not partake of the general enthusiasm but being offended at a show of discourtesy by Hazin and actuated by jealousy he picked faults in his diwan and embodied his adverse criticism in a treatise entitled *Tambihul Ghaflin* (Advice to Careless People). After the devastation of Delhi by Nadirshah he left for Lucknow on the advice of Nawab Salar Jang and died in that city in 1169 A. H. (1756 A. D.) but in conformity with his wishes his corpse was brought back by Nawab Salar Jang to Delhi where it now reposes in peace. He was a learned man of high attainments and was an eminent Persian poet. He had great capabilities and a genius for invention and eloquence which earned great celebrity for him in India. He is the author of several works among which is a Persian diwan consisting of 30,000 couplets, commentaries on Sikandarnama, the qasidas of Urfi and Saadi's Gulistan; lexicons in Persian *(Siraj-ul-Lughat)* and in Hindustani, *Gharaib-ul-Lughat* "the mysteries of the Language" a Urdu dictionary of mystic words, and *Nawadir-ul-farz* also a Hindustani dictionary; treatises of rhetoric and eloquence called *Mohibat-i-Uzma* and *Atia-i-Kubra*; a biography entitled Majmua-ul-Nafaes which is also called Tazkira-i-Arzu containing the memoirs of Indian poets who have written Persian, Hindustani and Deccani poems, and from which Mir Taqi quotes in his Nakat-ush-shaura. He is the author of about 15 works. He is remembered as a great master

Arzu. 1689-1756 A. D.

of still greater pupils, and is entitled to a niche in the temple of fame for his service to Urdu language in encouragement offered to young aspirants for literary achievements.

Hatim, 1699-1791 A. D.

Hatim was the most celebrated of the early fathers of Urdu poetry and was the founder of the Delhi school of poets which gave an impetus to the movement initiated by Wali. He wrote rekhta in imitation of Wali, along with Mazmun, Naji and Abru. Sheikh Sahiruddin, Shah Hatim poetically surnamed Hatim was the son of Fatahuddin and was born in Delhi. The date of his birth could be drawn from the numerical value of the letters of his name, Zahur, 1111 A. H. which corresponds to 1699-1700 A. D. He was a soldier by profession, and lived for some time in the companionship of Nawab Amir Khan, Subah of Allahabad. In 1722 A.D. the diwan of Wali came to Delhi and verses of it were on everybody's lips. Pricked by emulation, Hatim began to compose verses in rekhta which attained a high degree of perfection. This distinguished poet also took part in the *mushairas* or literary assemblies convened by Dard, Mir and afterwards Mushaffi in Delhi. During all his life he was considered the first poet of his time in rekhta as those who interested themselves in poetry recognized him as their master. Hatim wrote two diwans one very obscene in the ancient manner full of ahyam or double meaning and another according to the new taste. He also finished a masnavi on the *huqqa* (Indian pipe) at the command of the Emperor Mahommad Shah which is not so interesting. Besides he has written a diwan in Persian. He was a very sober-minded man, very polished and refined. He has given a list of 45 poets who studied the art of versification under him and put it at the head of his diwan. Rafi-us-sauda, one of the greatest of Urdu poets stands at the head. Amongst others, the most noted are Rangin, Nisar, Taban and Farigh. Hatim was very witty and fond of *bons mots*. He directed his attention to the purification of the tongue and excluded many uncouth and inelegant words. He was a century ahead of his times for the reforms and changes he advocated were not taken up until the time of Zauq, Atish and Nasikh. His contemporaries were not so keen as he was, and hence no considerable progress was made. It is interesting to know what Hatim writes about himself. "I have been practising the art of writing poetry for 40 years from 1129 to 1169 A. H. (1716-1755 A. D.). I recognise Saib as my master in Persian poetry and Wali in Urdu poetry who was the first to compile a diwan in that language (sic)......My contemporaries are Abru, Mazmun, Mazhar, Ahsan, Naji and Ikrang. I have given up the use of certain words such as *bar* and *dar* which I abundantly employed in my former diwan. I only employ those Persian and Arabic words which are easy, elegant and fluent and

used in common parlance amongst the polished. I have given up the use of Hindi words and vernacularized forms of Arabic and Persian words. I also insist on a mastery in the construction of verses and I attempt at polished eloquence." Hatim's themes are amatory and spiritual. His verses are easy and flowing and his language refined and polished though there is a tendency to redundance of words due to the influence of time and the infancy of the language. He died in Delhi in 1791 or 1792 A. D. or according to Mushaffi in 1196 A. H. (1784 A. D.) Mir speaks contemptuously about Hatim, makes emendations in his verses, and thinks him to be an "egotistical fool." Hasan however testifies to his popularity as a poet and says that his verses were sung in assemblies by singers. The position of Hatim is unique in Urdu Literature. He is the great master of Sauda and other poets. He is the greatest of early writers who took an important part in the formation and refinement of language and in moulding the course of Urdu poetry.

Mazmun, died 1754 A. D.

Mazmun is the poetical appellation of Sheikh or Mian Sharaf-uddin, one of the grandsons of the celebrated Pir Farid-uddin surnamed Shakarganj (treasure of sugar). He was born at Jajmau a town near Agra, and was a soldier but he changed the sword for the pen. While young he went to Delhi where he took up his abode in the mosque called Zinat-ul-Masajid and led the life of a dervish. He was however very jovial, laughter-loving, witty, and gregarious. Mir calls him an enlivener of assemblies. He is regarded as one of the masters of that age and followed the traditions and fashions of style of that period. He left a diwan of about 200 verses composed of charming pieces but full of obscene and far-fetched metaphors and double meanings, the craze of the early period. Although older than Arzu he used to seek his advice in his compositions. Mir considers his verses to be excellent and commends him for his inventions and search for new words. Sauda also speaks in high terms and Hasan showers his flowery praise. Arzu used to call him *shair-i-bedana* because he had lost all his teeth as the result of a cold. He died about the year 1158 A. H. (1745 A. D.) and was a distinguished poet of that period.

Mazhar, 1698-1781 A. D.

Mirza Jan Jan or Jan Janan of Delhi, son of Mirza Jan, is one of the most celebrated of Urdu poets of his time. He selected Mazhar as his *nom de plume*. He was no less distinguished for the grace and spirit of his compositions than for the independent spirituality and anti-idolatrous nature of his sentiment. He was born at Agra according to Beale and Garcin de Tassy about the year 1110 A. H. (1698 A. D.) or in 1111 A. H. at Kalabagh in Malwa according to Azad. His father was a mansabdar in the time of Alamgir and was descended from Ali and distantly allied to the royal family.

His father died when he was only sixteen. He frequented the society of fakirs and derwishes, became a great derwish himself and included Hindus and Mohammadans amongst his disciples. Mir speaks very reverently of him and describes him as a dervish full of piety and sanctity, a learned man, full of grace and accomplishments, incomparable, honoured and esteemed. He was a great lover of beauty both worldly and spiritual. He was deeply attached to the poet Taban and was very intimate with him. He was a profound scholar and had studied jurisprudence with care. He belonged to the Hanafi sect after the manner of Naqshbands. He scrupulously followed the injunctions of the Quran and was very sober and staid. He spent most of his time in meditations and was charming in his conversation. He was punctilious on a point of etiquette and never permitted any breach of it. He had acquired a reputation which he well merited not only for his intellectual attainments but for the uprightness of his character. He knew how to combine lively piety with human beauty. It is said he even worked miracles.

His works form a landmark in the history of Urdu language and poetry. He refined and clarified the language, struck new veins, and dealt a *coup de grace* to the double meaning so current in earlier poets, and imported from the Hindi dohras. No justice has been done to him although he introduced new and original thoughts and elegant Persian constructions and was one of the pioneers who freed Urdu poetry from the leading strings of dohras. He brought a new taste in Urdu poetry. He modelled his verses on those of the Persian. Mushaffi and Shauq in their tazkiras commended his efforts in this direction. His verses are easy and flowing. He wrote eloquently both prose and verse, and having passed through the whole gamut of experience he does not draw from his imagination but describes what he himself has felt. His erotic verses have a spiritual tendency and are full of passion and poignancy. The language is both refined and elegant. He has left a diwan in Persian of about 1,000 couplets which he selected from his older diwan of about 20,000 couplets, an incomplete diwan in Urdu, and an anthology of his select pieces from Persian poets called *Kharita-i-Jawahir*. It is told of him that, one day, sitting on the terrace of his own house, while a procession of Shiahs passed along with Taziahs in commemoration of the death of the Prince of Martyrs he mocked them and expressed his opinion that it was ridiculous after 1,200 years to keep up the same mourning and that it was absurd to prostrate themselves before pieces of wood, meaning the taziahs. These remarks were heard by carriers of banners and flags who were taking part in the procession. They determined to avenge the insult offered by a partisan of another sect. So, on the last night of this festival (on 10th Moharram) two of the vindictive

partisans returned and called for him. Suspecting nothing, he came out and the fanatic without uttering a word fired at Mazhar who died of this wound and is considered a martyr by his co-religionists. This took place in Delhi in 1194 A. H. (1780 A. D.).

Amongst his pupils are, Yakin, Hazin, Bisawanlal Bedar, Imamullah Khan and Fakir Shah Dardaman.

Naji.

Mohammad Shakir poetically surnamed Naji was a Syed and a soldier by profession. He served as a darogha of the nobleman Amir Khan. He was a contemporary of Abru, Hatim and Wali and flourished in the reign of Mohammad Shah. He was present at the devastation of Delhi by Nadir Shah of which he has left a very vivid account in a mukhammas. He died early in the prime of his youth. Arzu has acknowledged his talents as a poet and compliments him on writing better verses than himself. He was very amiable, very sprightly and fond of jokes and had the habit of criticising everybody. Mir writes that he used to compose obscene verses, and recite them to people thus exciting them to hilarity without laughing himself. His verses have been collected in a diwan and they have acquired celebrity in Delhi by the charming and graceful ideas which abound in them. He wrote in a metaphorical and obscure style which distinguishes the Urdu poets of that epoch when he flourished, and he employed the double meaning so common in use at that period.

Taban.

Taban is the *nom de plume* of Mir Abdul Hai of Delhi, a youth whose extraordinary beauty was the theme of contemporary poets and of whose personal charms it is related that they were the envy and despair of the other sex and the admiration of all who beheld him. He used to dress himself in black to set off his handsome person. The Emperor Shah Alam went to see him and he became generally known by the *soubriquet* of Joseph the second. He was insensible to the advances of amorous women but attached himself to a young man called Suleiman known as Suleiman Shah who made professions of being a derwish. He was also a favourite of Mazhar. Most biographers including Azad aver that Taban died in early manhood, his death being commonly ascribed to dropsy brought about by excessive drinking but Lutf in his Tazkirah Gulshan-i-Hind says that he knew him as old man in Lucknow in 1201 A. H. (1786-87 A. D.) and that he was still retaining the beauty for which he was so famous. Fallon also writes that he was alive in 1797 A. D. He was a true Syed and Mir makes a pompous eulogy full of charming metaphors. Mir writes that he was a pleasant man, a charming companion, beautiful in person, amiable in temper, well behaved and of an amorous disposition. He became addicted to drink and whenever people visited him they

found him tipsy. His friends ceased their visits but he repented too late for he was shortly claimed by death. His odes are held in high estimation for their delicacy of sentiment and elegance of diction. They are erotic in character. He was a pupil of Hatim and of Hashmat. He was connected with Mazhar and according to Lutf he showed his compositions to Sauda in Lucknow. Mir, Hasan, and others assert that he died in the prime of his youth which is more probable.

Yakrang.

Mustaffa Kuli Khan "*Yakrang*" (sincere) was one of the grandsons of Khan Jehan Lodhi. He was one of the officers of Mohammad Shah and lived in dignity and honour. He is counted amongst the distinguished writers of Delhi of that age. His style is full of new, far-fetched and strained metaphors and resembles that of Abru and Mazmun whose contemporary he was. According to one writer he was a pupil of Abru and according to others of Arzu but he called himself the disciple of Mazhar. He is the author of an esteemed diwan and this collection consists of erotic and mystic pieces which the vulgar consider chants inspired by profane love while the spiritualists recognise in them the passionate yearning for love divine. The dates of his birth and death are not known. He has also written a marsia (elegy) on the death of Imam Hussain, a fragment of which is quoted by Mir.

Fighan, died 1772 A.D.

Fighan the poetical name of Ashraf Ali Khan, the son of Mirza Ali Khan, Nukta, was the koka or foster-brother of Ahmad Shah of Delhi. He was honoured with the title of Zarif-ul-mulk Koka Khan Bahadur. He was very witty and full of humour, and very amiable in character. His conversation was piquant and witty and he was very fond of punning. After the devastation of Delhi by Ahmad Shah Durrani he went to Murshidabad where his uncle Iraj Khan was in power. From there he went to Oudh to the court of Nawab Shujauddaulah who received him with great honour and courtesy but having a very sensitive temperament he took offence and went to Patna where he was welcomed with still greater honour by Maharaja Shitab Rai who treated him with great consideration. After some time he broke with the Maharaja and led a retired life. He died at Patna in 1186 A.H. (1772 A.D.) and was buried there. He is the author of an estimable diwan in Urdu containing about 2,000 couplets and his verses are marked by much purity of language. He also left a Persian diwan as Hasan and Mir aver. Sauda and Mir speak very highly about his compositions. He was the disciple of Nadim as he himself writes and not of Ummid as Mushaffi asserts. Fighan is particularly happy in combining Hindi and Persian idioms with sweetness and perfect harmony. He expresses his ideas with exquisite delicacy. He never employed 'double meaning', though there are glimmerings

of this figure of speech in the works of later writers such as Sauda and Mir, abstained from the use of low, debased and obscene words and trite sentiments, and maintained the high level of his verses throughout. He is fluent and eloquent and writes qitas having continuity of description. Sauda pays him the subtle compliment of intercalating some of his verses and Mir speaks of him with flattering esteem. His diwan contains ghazals, qasidas, rubaiyat, mukhammasat, qitayat and other varieties of composition.

Minor poets.

Urdu poetry gained considerable currency. Consequently there was an abundance of Urdu poets who are unimportant and without any distinctive merit. The early tazkiras, especially those of Mir Taqi and Mir Hasan are full of their names and specimens from their compositions. They are not remembered and no mention of them could conveniently and profitably be made in this book.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DELHI SCHOOL OF URDU POETS, PART II.

THE AGE OF MIR AND SAUDA

This period saw a great development of and advance in Urdu poetry. It attained a high watermark of excellence. It saw the rise of some of the greatest masters of Urdu verse. The names of Khwaja Mir Dard, Mir Hasan, Sauda and Mir are some of the most distinguished and honoured on the bead-roll of Urdu literature.

A brilliant epoch which saw the rise of great poets and great master-pieces.

Most of the forms of poetic composition reached, their climax. The masnavi of Mir Hasan entitled *Siharul-Bayan*, the panegyrics and satires of Sauda, the ghazals of Mir and Dard have set up a standard for Urdu poetry. These writers are reckoned as masters and their works are criterions and touch-stones to judge the productions of a later age. Veneration for the writers and works of this period has not diminished by the lapse of time. Succeeding poets of ability such as Ghalib, Zauq and Nasikh have acknowledged their greatness and have paid their homage which is justly due to these master spirits.

The productions of this period set up a standard for future compositions.

In the matter of the language Sauda and Mir both tried hard to carry on the work of their predecessors. Sauda imported new Persian constructions, idioms and words, many of them engrafting themselves without fear of dislodgement. Mir also drew from the source.

Further Persianization of the language.

Hasan contented himself with what there was in the language. There was no fixity of gender and words were used as masculine and feminine according to the pleasure of the writer or the mood of the moment. Sauda and Mir also imported new metres in Urdu and attempted new forms of composition. Wasokht, Musullus and Murabba were for the first time used by Mir in Urdu although Wasokht originated in Persian with Fughani and Wahshi. Qasida and Hijv were perfected by Sauda and brought to the present pitch of excellence. Difficult metres with stiff rhymes and double rhymes were begun to be indulged in by Sauda in ghazals to show his mastery over language and verse.

No fixity of gender.

New metres and new forms of poetic composition Wasokht, Hijv, Musullus and Murabba and old forms perfected.

This age also saw the improvement in verse-technique. The couplets were more terse and compact and contained less of padding and redundant words, a fault so common in the previous age.

Improvement in versification.

General exodus of poets from Delhi.

It was in this period that poets forsook their homes in Delhi owing to the frequent onsets of the Afghans and free-booting campaigns of the Mahrattas. The shocks became too severe and too frequent. Sauda, Mir, Hasan, Soz and many other minor poets of this age sought refuge in the opulent court of the Nawabs of Oudh. Mir Dard as became his position is a solitary exception.

Inequality of verses and use of debased words.

Common sentiments and debased language are found cheek by jowl with sublime fancies and dignified expressions. The poems also do not maintain a high level of excellence. It is said of Mir by one of the earliest writers of a tazkira, "that his common verses are of the lowest type and his sublime verses are those of the highest." It is the inequality of Wordsworth. Nawab Mustafa Khan Shaifta makes a similar objection in his *Gulshan-i-Bekhar* about the verses of Sauda. This is a penalty to be paid when poems are written in season and out of season. Both Sauda and Mir were voluminous writers and wrote copiously. It was natural that all verses could not be of the same quality. Mir Dard who wrote in inspired moments had less of this blemish and his output was necessarily smaller.

Compilation of Tazkiras.

This age saw the compilation of tazkiras or biographical notices of the lives of Urdu poets with selections from their works. These are very useful and throw a flood of light on the obscurity of this period. The *Nakat-ush-Shaura* of Mir and *Tazkara-i-Shaura-i-Urdu* of Hasan are now available and though scanty and sketchy are highly useful and serve as guides to the historian of Urdu poetry.

Dard 1133—1199 A. H.

Khwaja Mir, also known as Mian Saheb, with the poetical surname of '*Dard*' (pain) was the son of Khwaja Mir Nasir Ali, *Andalib*, a poet himself, who has left a voluminous Diwan in Persian entitled *Nala-i-Andalib*, or the "Murmurings of the Nightingale". From his father's side he was descended from Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshband and he could trace his descent, on his mother's side, to Hasrat Ghos Azam. His maternal grandfather was Mir Syed Mohammad Hasni, the son of Nawab Mir Ahmad Khan the subject of eulogy on the part of Sauda who had been killed in the battle of Panipat against Nadir Shah. His paternal grandfather came to India from Bokhara and his father Khwaja Nasir was born in India and was enrolled as a royal mansabdar. After a time he gave up the rank and became the religious pupil of Khwaja Mohammad Zubair and was in constant association with Shah Gulshan Pir who had influenced Wali in his career as a rekhta

poet. Dard speaks very feelingly about his attainments in poetry, spiritualism and music.

Dard was born in 1133 A. H. and acquired learning from his father paying special attention to commentaries, traditions, sufism and theology. In the prime of his youth he attended to his worldly duties and his jagir. Mushaffi, who wrote his tazkira in 1209 A. H. states that Dard was originally a soldier by profession, but he gave up the army on the advice of his father and subsequently led the life of a devotee. At the age of 28 he relinquished the world and its attachments and became a dervish. At the age of 39, on the death of his father, he succeeded him as the head of the disciples. Mir Dard's position as the head of the family of Chistis and Nawab Zafar Khan, and the spiritual chief of the religious order of Naqshbands gave him a great influence and invested him with inordinate respect from the people and the nobles of Delhi and surrounding places. This was enhanced by his own proficiency in spiritual sciences and sufism. Contemporary writers who wrote tazkirats estify eloquently to the unique influence of Dard, to the saintliness of his character and to the knowledge of Tasawaff (sufi doctrines). Dard was an embodiment of sobriety and culture. As befitting a true derwish he was of a very contented frame of mind and always resigned himself to the will of God. On the devastation of Delhi by Ahmad Shah Abdalli and subsequent incursions of the Marahattas (1759 A. D.) everybody of note amongst Urdu poets had left Delhi for the opulent and secure court of the Nawabs of Oudh ; but Dard never stirred out of his own sanctuary and remained in poverty and turmoil of the place perfectly satisfied with his lot. He was extremely independent and never sought the favour of the Royal Court by fawning and cringing or 'bending the crooked hinges of the knees' before those in power. Twice he refused to see the then reigning Emperor Shah Alam and once he openly upbraided him for a supposed breach of etiquette in his assembly. Dard was a master of Indian music and the greatest 'artist' of the day came to him as to a teacher. A crowd of musicians used to assemble in his house on 1st, 2nd and 22nd of every month, of their own accord without being summoned and used to leave without being told to do so. Mian Firoz Khan, the master-singer of his time, used to attend and expound the intricacies of the art. The inhabitants of all classes used to take part in the concert. In Moharram he used to hold an assembly for the reciting of the elegies and threnodies (Marsias). He also held meeting of notable Sheikhs at his house which would attract the highest and the greatest in the City and Shah Alam deemed it a privilege to be allowed to attend them. Once he had the misfortune to stretch his legs on account of pain and he was immediately censured by Dard for his indecorous behaviour.

Dard conceived a passion for composition at a very early age. The following is the list of his works which are all published.

1. Israr-ul-Salwaat.
2. Risala-i-Wardaat.
3. Ilmul-Kitab.
4. Nala-i-Dard.
5. Ah-i-Sard.
6. Dard-i-Dil.
7. Shama-i-Mahfil.
8. Hurmat Ghina.
9. Waqiyat-i-Dard.
10. Diwan-i-Farsi.
11. Diwan-i-Urdu.

At the age of fifteen Dard wrote Israr-ul-Salwaat. It is a brochure dealing with the mysteries of prayer. Risala-i-Wardaat was written at the age of 29 and was finished in 1172 A. H. It deals with spiritual themes in prose and verse. Ilmul-Kitab is a voluminous commentary of Risala-i-Wardaat written at the instance of Mir Asar, his favourite pupil and disciple. He has expounded the themes and adduced learned arguments based on texts of the Quran and the traditions and holy sayings and precepts. It also furnishes materials for Dard's biography. Nala-i-Dard and Ah-i-Sard which were finished in 1190 A. H. and 1193 A. H. respectively deal with spiritual subjects which exercised the mind of Dard at that period. These thoughts as they were uttered were gathered by Asar and compiled into these two books. Shama-i-Mahfil was undertaken by Dard when he was 62 years of age and he laboured at it with ardour and diligence for 4 years. Sahifa-i-Wardaat was also written side by side and commenced and finished at the same time. Hurmat Ghina and Waqiyat-i-Dard are also treatises on Sufism and serve to explain abstruse matters in spiritualism. Diwan-i-Farsi is a short Diwan in Persian consisting of rubais, ghazals and mukhammas, etc. The last, but the most important is the Diwan in Urdu, one of the brightest jewels in the crown of Urdu poetry. The rest of his works are all in Persian.

Urdu, Diwan, Dard's style.

It is a short Diwan of which a correct and elegant edition has been brought out by Nizami Press with a learned introduction from the pen of Habibur-Rahman Sherwani. Dard's style is very eloquent, clear, intelligible, and perspicuous. It is polished and poignant, full of fire and pathos. His ghazals are marked by apt idioms, lofty thoughts, chastened emotions and refined diction. He is the best exponent of Sufism and he shows great skill in developing the themes of spiritualism. His verses are equal to Mir in simplicity and directness and the effect is enhanced and beauty heightened by the introduction of spiritualism. He is unrivalled in short metres and his verses in them are the quintessence of all that is sublime and sweet. He never wrote lampoons or satires and his thoughts are always sober and staid fixed on high. Now

and then archaic words can be detected but they do not detract from the merit of the composition and their presence is due to the language of the time. His conception of worldly love is very high. He does not confound worldly love 'Ishk Majazi' with sensuality 'Bulhavasi', neither does he believe that sensual love would lead one to love spiritual. He identifies worldly love with his love for his Pir or for his real intimate friends. He does not believe in the ordinary 'Bazar love'. Similarly his conception of poetry is sublime. He deprecates its being made a means of self-advancement. Likewise he advises the writing of poetry in inspired moments in the very white heat of emotion.

Importance of Mir Dard.

Dard's position in Urdu literature is very high.. He is one of the four pillars (with Mir, Sauda and Mazhar) of Urdu language who freed it from the double meaning of Hindi Dohras, refined it, polished it and adorned it with sublime themes. He introduced in a large measure themes of Sufism and spiritualism and gave a corrective to Urdu poetry. He set up a very high standard in Urdu poetry and pointed the way by his own admirable compositions, which are an exponent of his extremely fine taste. He exercised considerable influence on his contemporaries and successors.

Dard and his contemporaries.

Dard enjoyed the respect and esteem of his contemporaries. Mir speaks very reverently and in hyperbolical terms in the Nakat-ush-Shaura. He praises Dard in choice metaphors and far fetched figures of speech, for the loftiness of his thoughts and the elegance of his diction. He commends his politeness, his humility, his sincerity, his abstemious habits, his sanctity and piety and the respect he commanded by virtue of his position and saintly character. He quotes feelingly Dard's remark about himself that he (Mir) would one day become the Mir or the leader of the assembly. It was at Dard's instance that Mir held the mushaira at his house. In fact Mir speaks of Dard as a pupil would of his master and Garcin de Tassy actually mentions Mir as his pupil. It is however the respect and the esteem for the great sanctity, independence, spiritual attainments and accomplishments as a poet. Hasan follows suit. He also perfected his poetical tastes in the company of Dard, and modelled his style on his. Indirectly he has influenced Anis through Mir Hasan.

His pupils.

He left many poets as his pupils chief amongst whom are Qaim, Hidayat, Firaq and Asar, the first and the last being the most important and famous. His son was Ziyaul Nasir poetically surnamed '*Alam*'.

His death.

There are some conflicting opinions about the date of his death and the length of his life. According to Beale, he died in 1199 A. H. (1785 A. D.); according to Lutf in 1202 A. H. (1787 A.D.), according to Mushaffi in 1209

A.H. (1793-1794 A.D.) the year in which he wrote his biography. Garcin de Tassy and Lyall follow Mushaffi. Azad states that he died in 1199 A.H. in Delhi at the age of 66 years. A contemporary poet Bedar quoted by Sherwani in his introduction has a chronogrammatic verse which gives the date 1199 A. H. and he age 68 years. But according to Dard's own statement his age was only 66 at the time of his death which was miraculously revealed to him beforehand by God as written by Dard himself in his book Shama-i-Mahfil. Dard's testimony about his age and the date of his death as confirmed by the chronogrammatic verse is conclusive. He died in 1199 A.H. at the age of 66.

His position.

Dard was the most striking personality of his age and his influence on Urdu poetry and on his distinguished contemporaries was immense and far-reaching. As a Sufi poet he has had no equal in India. He ranks as one of the greatest poets in Urdu literature.

Mir Soz 1133-1213 A.H. (1720-1798 A. D.)

Syed Mohammad Mir whose *nom de plume* is Soz was the son of Syed Ziauddin, and is a descendant of the Saint Kutb Alam Gujarati. His ancestors lived at Bukhara but Soz was born at Delhi. Soz was an archer of remarkable strength and skill and was an adept in horsemanship and the use of various arms. He was also noted for his great strength and was distinguished by the beauty of his calligraphy inasmuch as he could write excellently the seven different kinds of ornamental writing. In the commencement of his career he allowed himself to be dominated by the violence of his sensual passions and indulged in licentiousness, but in 1191 A. H. (1777 A.D.) in the 18th year of Shah Alam II's reign (1759-1806 A. D.) he became a dervish or a religious mendicant, entered into the path of spiritual liberty and seeing the devastated condition of Delhi left for Lucknow, having stayed for some time at Farrukhabad with Nawab Maharban Khan *Rind*, where he took up his residence and where he was befriended by Nawab Asafuddaula who also became his pupil in the art of writing verses. Being dissatisfied at Lucknow he left in 1212 A. H. (1797 A. D.) for Murshidabad which was the seat of the Nawabs of Bengal, but returned the same year to Lucknow and died shortly afterwards in 1213 A. H. (1798 A. D.). According to Beale, Soz died in 1212 A. H. at the age of 80. According to Lutf, he died in 1213 A. H. Mushaffi states in his tazkira that Soz was then 70 years of age, and Nassakh (*Sukhan-i-Shaura*) writes that he died at Tilhar at the age of 80. Firoz in his Tazkirat-ush-Shaura says that he died in 1213 A. H. (1798A. D.) at the age of 70. It is probable that Soz died in 1213 A.H. at the age of 80.

Soz was a witty and a pleasant man, courteous and good-natured. He had an amiable temper, was self-respecting, independent and humble, and was an embodiment of sincerity.

He has left a Urdu Diwan comprising ghazals, masnavis, quatrains and mukhammas. His verses are clear and easy and his style is very agreeable. His language is very sweet and admirably suited to the composition of ghazals. His style has no trace of labour and is characterized by spontaneity, refinement of idiom, and elegance of diction. No ornaments or extravagant hyperoble encumber his sweet and simple verses. There is no interlarding of figures of speech as in Sauda. High-flown similes, subtle metaphors and obscure allusions are absent. Mir equals him in simplicity and pathos but excels him in true poetic qualities. Soz does not employ the new Persian construction, themes and idioms which are lavishly used by Sauda and Mir. He delights in adopting only *Radif.* He belongs to the older generations of poets as regards language. He is no reformer. Soz did not write anything except ghazals which were admirably suited to his temperament. In him are found the beginnings of the new school of rekhti writers who composed licentious verses in the dialect peculiar to women. He was also famous as a reciter of verses and his mode of recitation was considerably imitated in his days. He modulated his excellent and flexible voice to the peculiar nature of his verses and recited them with great pathos and striking effect. He sought the aid of gestures. Mir Hasan in his biography of Urdu poets speaks eulogistically in figures of speech and pays a tribute to Soz's admirable recitation, his incomparable knowledge of theology, his attainments as a dervish, his merits as a prose writer, and his poetic gifts. Lutf writing in his Gulshan-i-Hind in 1215 A. H. calls him the 'prince of amorous style' and thinks his verse to be full of fire and pathos.

His style.

Soz originally adopted Mir as his Takhallus but when Mir Taqi became famous under that poetical surname he changed it to Soz. He himself introduces both these *nom de plumes* in one of his couplets.

Soz ranks high in Urdu Literature though he does not attain the position occupied by Mir and Sauda. He is noted as a writer of ghazals full of directness, simplicity and pathos and his writings are important not only for the beauties inherent in them but also for showing the beginnings of rekhti poems, which were brought to perfection by Rangin in Delhi and Jan Saheb in Lucknow.

His position.

Sauda, the poetical surname of Mirza Mohammad Rafi is generally considered to be the greatest and most powerful of Urdu poets. His ancestors belonged to a noble stock, and originally came from Kabul. They followed the honourable profession of arms. His father Mirza Mohammad Shafi left his native home for Delhi and settled there as a merchant. To Delhi belongs the honour of the

Sauda 1125 to 1195 A. H. (1713 to 1781) A.D.

birth of Sauda. Azad gives the date of his birth as 1125 A. H. (1713 A. D.) but it seems to be a conjecture, as there is no definite record of the length of his life and no date of his birth is mentioned by his contemporary or subsequent biographers. He adopted the *nom de plume* of Sauda (melancholy) in conformity with the practice of Urdu and Persian poets who professed to be ardent votaries at the shrine of love, the word melancholy or insanity being an allusion to the ecstasy of love while delicately hinting at trade (sauda also meaning merchandise) the calling of his father.

Sauda was brought up at Delhi and was at first a pupil of Suleiman Kuli Khan poetically called ' Widad ' and afterwards of the celebrated Shah Hatim. Shah Hatim mentioned the name of Sauda at the top of the list of his pupils appended to his Diwan and speaks about him with feeling, esteem and honour. He does not seem to have received any regular lessons from Khan Arzu but he gained much experience in writing poetry by his companionship. It was at his instance that he took to rekhta and discarded Persian although he could never wean himself completely from its influence but often composed in that language. Sauda's compositions soon attained popularity and were sung in streets and assemblies. He became an universal favourite and captured the attention of Shah Alam who was himself a poet of Persian and Urdu and who had adopted the pseudonym of Aftab. He formally became the pupil of Sauda and began to submit his verses to him for correction.

Sauda soon quarrelled with his master on a trifle and left visiting his court. He, however, relied on his patrons amongst the noblemen of Delhi for support, chief of whom were Basant Khan and Meharban Khan who treated him with great generosity and munificence and who are consequently the subject of many encomiastic verses. It was his love for Delhi and the ease and comfort with which he was passing his life there, that made him refuse an invitation, courteously and affectionately worded from Nawab Shujauddaulah of Oudh, who had heard of his talents and fame as a poet.

Departure for Lucknow.

A revolution set in in Delhi. Old times changed and Sauda's patrons died one after another. Delhi could not bear the repeated shocks and onsets of the invaders, the Afghans on the one hand and the Marhattas on the other. Life, property, and honour were not safe and patronage was not so lavish so as to induce a sojourn in such conditions of uncertainty and perturbation. There was a general exodus of poets and Sauda followed the example. He left Delhi when about 60 years of age and after a short sojourn at the court of Nawab Bangash Khan of Farrukhabad, he finally settled at Lucknow in 1185 A. H. (1772 A. D.) where he entered the service of Nawab

Shujauddaulah. An ungenerous and sarcastic but playful allusion to his former invitation and his unceremonious refusal brought about a rupture between the Nawab and Sauda and made Sauda lead a retired life.

Sauda was again restored to favour of the Nawab and he partook of his bounties along with other court poets. A quarrel between Sauda and a Persian poet by name Fakhir Makin led to the intervention of a relation of the new Nawab Asaf-ud-daulah the successor of the Nawab Shujauddaulah who became a medium of reconciliation and his introduction was attended with the grant of an annual stipend of six thousand rupees and the conferment on him of the high title of *Malak-ush-shaura* the prince of poets. This laureateship brought ease and comfort in its train and ripened the ever growing intimacy with the Nawab, who became very fond of him and often forewent the pleasures of the zenana for the delights of his society and poetry. Sauda died at Lucknow in 1195 A. H. (1781 A. D.). Numerous chronograms pointing to this year of death have been composed by his contemporaries and later poets, *viz*., Mushaffi, Minnat, Fakhurruddin, Nasikh, and Nassakh.

Sauda was well versed in all kinds of poetical compositions and has written copiously. His works are :—

(i) A Diwan of Persian Ghazals, incomplete but very well spoken of.

(ii) A few Qasidas in Persian.

(iii) A Diwan of Urdu Ghazals including fards or detached distichs, as, rubais, qitas or chronogrammatic poems ; mukhammasat or stanzas of 5 lines each, tarjihband, wasokht, a passionate erotic ode composed of strophes in which particular rhymes are repeated at each hemistich, the strophes being terminated by a Persian or Urdu verse in a different rhyme, and mustzad.

(iv) Twenty-four masnavis and versified tales consisting mostly of satires, lampoons with anecdotes, witticisms, eulogies and collections of riddles.

(v) Diwan of qasidas which chiefly consist of panegyrics of Nawab Asafuddaulah and of men of high rank at Delhi and Lucknow.

(vi) Verses by Mir with amplifications by Sauda and two letters to Mir, one in verse and the other in prose.

(vii) Salaam and marsias on the death of Imam Hassain and manqabat or invocatory verses to God.

(viii) Poems in praise of holy men of religion.

(ix) A pamphlet in prose entitled 'Ibrat-ul-Ghaflin' or 'Admonition to the Heedless.'

(x) A prose translation of the Masnavi Shuala-i-Ishq (flame of love) of Mir Taqi.

(xi) A biography or tazkira of Urdu poets (not extant).

Sauda's importance.

Sauda is the most striking personality of his age and with Mir Taqi shares the glory of being the greatest of Urdu poets of his age and for all times. His immense services to the language, to poetry, and to the technique of versification are unique. His influence was considerable and far reaching.

1. Service to the language.

He took a prominent part in breaking the harshness of some of the Hindi words with the softer tunes of the Persian. It was pre-eminently Sauda who along with Mir upheld the dignity of the rekhta, raised its prestige and evoked new melodies from it. Sauda imported abundantly Persian turns of expression, constructions, metaphors, similes, allusions and idioms and wove them dexterously and harmoniously in the texture of Urdu thus widening its range and making the language flexible, nervous and capable of being wielded for any purpose. He also created original idioms and used constructions of his own invention, modelled on those of Persian, many of them having survived him passed current although some were still-born and died with him. It would have been equally fortunate if he had felicitously adopted many more soft and sweet sounding Bhasha words. His taste and judgment in selecting expressions meant to enrich his vocabulary was siugularly well formed, happy and correct, for most of those forms bear the hall-mark of public approval and have become a part and parcel of the language. Nor does he ignore the Indian traditions and allusions for references to Bhasha words such as Bhujbal, Parbat, Saban, Rai etc., and Indian mythologies such as the bravery of Arjun, the amorous sporting of Kanhaiya or Krishna are numerous and varied and they give a flavour of genuineness although such references were ignored with disdain by later writers. He even coined Indian words to suit Indian themes. The obstructions in the path of writers of that age were not easily surmountable. The double meaning or ahyam still survived and had to be killed, the difficulty of fusing and blending Hindi and Persian words had not been finally overcome, the range was to be widened to make Urdu poetry fit to take long and sustained flights. Sauda's work should be viewed in this perspective. His services to the language and his mastery over it were recognised by his contemporaries and later writers such as Mushaffi and Insha and they all pay their homage to him.

Sauda built beautiful structures on the foundations laid by Wali and Hatim. He added two varieties of composition, the *Qasida* or laudatory ode and the *Hijv* or satire or lampoon. He may be regarded as the real originator of these forms in Urdu and was the first to write Qasidas in the present forms and to bring it to a pitch of perfection rarely achieved by later writers. He rivals and sometimes surpasses some of the choicest masters of Persian Qasida writers such as Urfi, Khaqani and Anwari. These Qasidas of Sauda vie with the best productions in Persian and sometimes excel them in point of vigour and subtlety of thought. He also improved the form of Marsia.

2. His services to Urdu poetry.

i. Qasida.

ii. Satire.

His satires are full of fire and wit and afford a fund of merriment and laughter. Sauda is irrepressible, incorrigible. No fear of punishment or love of reward could deter him from pouring his bile out. His servant Ghooncha (bud) was always ready with his pen-case and the materials of writing. He was the first to take up satire seriously. He descends in fierce invective against the '*vitiosior progenies*' of a degenerate age. "It is to satirists like Juvenal that we look for striking touches regarding the general state of things in the decline of a great empire; and Sauda who was also a satirist can furnish many a hint worthy of the consideration of those who would portray the last days of the Moghul Emperors. An amusing episode in which Sauda describes himself as having taken part with more bravery than Horace, tells us of the daring inroad of the Mahratta Cavalry up to the very walls of Delhi; a long querulous ode gives us a vivid picture of the poverty of the age and the fallen splendour of the Amirs and the nobles of the great Moghul; a lampoon against one Siddi Kafoor, the Kotwal of the town of Delhi, a comical description of the hardship endured by all who venture on the uncertain prospect of a merchant's life, and encounter the duties and demands of the custom house attendant." It is true that people before Sauda had poured forth their spleen by hinting sarcastically in one line or two but it was reserved for Sauda to take up satire systematically and to make it a weapon of great strength and power. Zahak the father of the famous Mir Hasan (the author of Sihar-ul-Biyan) Fidvi, Makeen, Baqa and others were in their turns the butts of his ridicule and targets for his sarcastic shots and they in turn retaliated though it must be confessed rather poorly. Sauda loved these jousts and enjoyed the excitement. His satires display in an eminent degree his command over the language and his wide and profound knowledge of various crafts and professions. He has a firm grasp of details and adroitly and aptly introduces both pathos and slang with remarkable effect. The generic pictures presented are original and refreshing and they do not take after any specific

Persian model. He is a sort of a Juvenal, a Voltaire, a Swift in the quality of his humour. There is nothing Addisonian about it. It is bitter, mordent scattering poison and malice. He invariably showers ridicule trenchant biting and gibing on the object of his attack.

His service to Urdu versification.

Sauda had a great command over the verse. Before him it was lax and feeble. He made it terse and compact, rid it of padding and redundant words. His verses move with a free swinging motion. There is no lameness and halt, feebleness and flaccidity about them. Looseness of structure gives way to compactness. Words are immovably set in their places as signet stones in the hollow of the rings, and they could not be dislodged without damage to their harmony or meaning of the verse. Sauda's verses are compact, forceful and eloquent. He introduced new metres from Persian into Urdu with new rhymes and new *radifs* (double enteute) and composed verses in them with such surprising skill and talent, that they still continue to be the delight and marvel of the present age. Some of these metres are very difficult and the *radifs* and *qafias* are stiff.

Sauda's influence on later poets.

Not only was Sauda a very great poet of great powers but he was an influence and kindled the fire of poetry in many a breast and served as a master to many a youthful writer. Like Spenser he could be reckoned as a poets' poet. With Mir his influence was great. Ghalib, one of the brightest stars in the firmament of Urdu poetry, pays his homage. Zouq modelled his ghazals and qasidas on those of Sauda, and always admired him. His poetry has fired the imagination of many poets, novices, and past masters in the art of writing verses. It is constantly read and admired. Some of the verses of Sauda have got that supreme virtue, the hall-mark of true poetry, the haunting quality rarely found in the realms of Urdu poetry though often met with in the works of Shelley and Keats. The names of Mir and Mirza are sources of inspiration and their works are highly esteemed being looked upon as models of eloquence and style. They serve as criterions and standards to judge Urdu poetry and their personalities are still an influence in assemblies where Urdu poetry is recited and appreciated.

It is generally held that Sauda was a supreme master of the art of poetry. His temperament was admirably suited to the writing of verses. Even Mir, his hypercritical and fastidious contemporary reckoned him to be a 'full poet' and speaks glowingly and enthusiastically about his poetic qualities. He thinks him to be worthy of the title of *Malak-us-shaura* or poet-laureate. Sauda's writings clearly show that his heart readily responded to the sensations from outside. He was highly impressionable. His

genius had many facets of extraordinary brilliance. His brain was full of vigour and his mind always on the alert. He tried every species of composition in Urdu poetry successfully. Some outstanding qualities distinguish him from his compeers. In the first place he had a wonderful command over the language. The vigour and force of language was admirably welded to the subtlety of thought. His verses are finished products of art marked by elegance of diction and beauty of happy expressions. There is no looseness or feebleness about them. Many of them are terse and compact and as brilliant and keen as the edge of the Ispahani sword. The words are beautifully and dexterously set which cannot be disturbed, without impairing the beauty of the verse. He is thoroughly skilled in his workmanship which is of a very high order. His thoughts are lofty and subtle. His style is eloquent and his fancy soars high. There is a fair sprinkling of metaphors and similes which enhance the beauty of the verses but which seldom if ever obtrude outrageously or distract attention. They never obscure the meaning and the general effect is not sacrificed to the symbols employed in the verse. Sauda had a versatile genius and his vision was both exalted and far-reaching. Sauda looks profoundly and deeply on the problems of life and philosophy. He tried to reach the core of the problems and his power to crystallise thought is wonderful. He was familiar with the various crafts and sciences of India. He shows knowledge of chemistry and geography in his verses.

The opinions of others about Sauda.

It would not be amiss to quote the testimony of some of the leading writers. Mir writes about him : " Sauda, a young man with pleasant manners and good temper, warm-hearted, jovial and sociable, of cheery disposition. He writes extremely well ghazals, qasidas, masnavis, qitas, mukhammas, and rubai. He is the head of Urdu poets. He is a beautiful writer. Mir now employs hyperbolical words to praise him. Each of his charming verses, which were introduced into the garden of eloquence are bouquets of flowers of thought and each of his well-measured hemistich is like a free cypress...he is fit to rank as the poet-laureate of Urdu poetry." Mir praises the satire called ' the derision of the age ' or *Tazhik-i-Rozgar* and says that in this poem Sauda has surpassed the limits of art. Mir quotes copiously from his verses. Lutf, Khalil, Mir Hasan and all subsequent biographers including Karimuddin praise his wonderful poetic powers and extol him to the skies in extravagant hyperbole. Qateel, a celebrated Persian poet of India, assigns him the rank of Zahuri in Urdu. Professor Sahbaz quotes the opinion of Shamsul-ulma Maulvi Imdad Imam who regarded Sauda as the Shakespeare of Urdu. Lyall regards him as one of the greatest poets of Urdu.

His limitations.

He was however not deeply imbued with the principles of Sufism as his contemporaries were. He was not

mystical and looked more to the world than to the hereafter. Some of his ghazals transcend the limits and lapse into exordiums of qasidas. They lose that sweetness, that simplicity and melody, that charm which is regarded as an essential characteristic of a ghazal. Delicate, polished, sweet, easy and flowing words are suited to depict the erotic sentiments of the ghazal; dignified, grand, sonorous and majestic words are fit to be used for serious subjects such as the qasida or panegyric. It happens that Sauda employs the words ordinarily fit for qasidas in ghazals which produce an incongruous effect. The reader is referred to the comparison of Sauda with Mir where these points are dealt with at a greater length.

Sauda is undoubtedly one of the greatest of Urdu poets and shares with Ghalib, Mir and Anis the highest place in Urdu literature.

Mir Hasan, died 1201 A. H. (October 1786).

Mir Ghulam Hasan, whose *nom de plume* is Hasan and who is generally known as Mir Hasan, was the son of Mir Ghulam Hasan Zahak (laughter). His ancestors were Syeds of Herat. His great-grandfather Mir Imami came to India and settled here. He was a noted calligraphist and a well known learned man of his age, a poet and a scholar, esteemed for his accomplishments by his contemporaries. Hasan's father was a convivial and genial man given to raillery and laughter as his pseudonym signifies. He figures in one of the biting satires of Sauda. Hasan was born at Delhi and studied poetry with his father in the beginning and then submitted his poetic effusions for correction to Khwajah Mir Dard. On the downfall of Delhi, Hasan went with his father to Oudh. On the way he visited Dig and stayed there for some time and from there he went to Makanpur with the procession of Shah Madar which he celebrated in one of his masnavis entitled *Gulzar-i-Iram*. He went to Fyzabad which was at the time the capital of the Nawabs of Oudh, and entered the service of Nawab Salar Jung Bahadur and was also an associate of his son Mirza Nawazish Ali Khan. Safdar Jung too was a poet. On the accession of Nawab Asafuddaulah to the throne in 1775 A. D., the seat of Government was transferred to Lucknow and Hasan also moved and settled there. He fell ill in 1200 A. H. (1785 A. D.) and died in Moharram 1201 A. H. (October 1781 A. D.) being over fifty years of age and was buried in Lucknow. Mushaffi has a chronogram on his death which gives the above-mentioned date; Lutf disagrees and states in his *Gulshan-i-Hind* that Hasan died in 1205 A. H. (1790-91 A. D.) but the first commands greater credence as Lutf is very often inaccurate.

Hasan was educated liberally although he knew no Arabic. He had a great command over Persian and wrote fluently and

with ease in that language. His biography of Urdu poets which has recently been published is written in high-flown, flowery, and flowing Persian. Azad states that Hasan was a pupil of Sauda in poetry. Mir writes in his Tazkira, "Hasan, a gentleman, often attends poetical assemblies convened by me at my house; he has a manly bearing and he practises poetry at the feet of Sauda". Hasan however writes about himself and clearly mentions in his account that he was a pupil of Mir Zayauddin Zaya a pupil of Mir Taqi but as he could not conform to his style of writing he modelled his poems on those of Dard, Sauda and Mir and followed faithfully in their footsteps. Mir Hasan, by his nature, was gay and humorous but his conversation was never obscene nor foolish. He was very sweet, and affable, amiable and learned. Nobody had any occasion to complain of Hasan and no contemporary biographers have anything ill to speak about him.

His style.

He has a remarkable, delicate and pure style. His language is elegant and flowery. He excelled in ghazals, rubais, masnavis and marsias, but was least successful in qasida. He is pre-eminent in masnavi and his *Sihar-ul-Bayan* (Sorcery of Eloquence) is considered to be one of the finest and best productions in Urdu. His ghazals are full of love themes and they partake of the sweetness, simplicity and charm of Mir's odes.

His sons.

He left four sons, three of whom were poets and lived at Fyzabad. Mir Mustahsan Khaleeq, a pupil of Mushaffi, Mir Mohsan poetically surnamed Mohsan, were employed with Mirza Taqi, son-in-law of Bahu Begum Saheb, mother of Nawab Asafuddaulah. Mir Hasan Khulq was the third and was attached to Nawab Nazir Darab Khan. They were clever writers of verses and followed the style of their father.

Mir Hasan's works consist of :—

His works.

1. A Diwan of ghazals in various metres to which are appended tarkibband, mukhammasat, wasokht, musullus, or a poem of three lines each, of which the first two lines are by Hasan some in Persian and others in Urdu and the third by different Persian poets of note.

2. Eleven Masnavis in all, the most important of which are :—

Masnavi Sihar-ul-Bayan or Badra-i-Munir.

(a) *Sihar-ul-Bayan* (Magic of Eloquence) a very popular Masnavi and the most famous work of Mir Hasan. It is also known under the title of *Masnavi-i-Mir Hasan* and *Qissa-i-Badra-i-Munir* which are the names of personages in the story. It was written in 1199 A. H. (1785 A. D.) and obtained honourable recognition from Nawab Asafuddaulah. The poem is a romance on the loves

of Prince Benazir and Badra Munir in which are introduced many interesting ethnographical details of female dress, marriage ceremonies and other customs. It is written in a simple style and abounds in proverbs and idiomatic phrases which have passed into the common speech of people. 'Every hemistich is peerless and every verse is like a shining moon.' It is a universal favourite and is termed 'crystallised eloquence'. It is remarkable for its delicacy of diction, elegance of style, purity of idiom and erotic theme. The story is of a conventional type. A prince brought up in the lap of luxury and reared in the strictest seclusion of the zenana is spirited away by a fairy who is enamoured of his matchless beauty. The prince after a little resistance resigns himself to his lot and is allowed to rove about on an enchanted horse made of wood, a present from his lady-love. In the course of his aerial promenades he descends into a beautiful garden and falls in love with a princess of dazzling beauty. The fairy discovering her false lover's secret *amour* seeks vengeance and after many adventures the prince is united with his lady-love and restored to his bereaved parents. The poem is extremely eloquent. The flash of retort, the sparkle of humour, the wonderful flow of the verses are all admirable. It shares with *Gulzar-i-Nasim* the highest rank amongst Masnavis in Urdu literature. The date of composition is known by chronograms written by Qateel and Mushaffi. A prose adaptation of this poem was made by Mir Bahadur Ali in 1217 A. H. (1802 A. D.) under the title of *Nasr-i-Benazir* (Incomparable Prose).

2. Gulzar-i-Iram.

(*b*) *Gulzar-i-Iram* which has been confounded by Garcin de Tassy, Karimuddin, Azad and Blumhardt with *Sihar-ul-Bayan*. It is quite an independent Masnavi having been composed in 1192 A. H. (1778 A. D.) and contains curious and interesting ethnographical details of female dress, marriage ceremonies and customs of Muslims and dances of Bayaderes (female dancers in the East Indies). This also contains a satire on Lucknow and a praise of Fyzabad.

3. Ramuz-ul-Arfin.

(*c*) *Ramuz-ul-Arfin* or 'Secrets of the Knowers' is not mentioned by any biographer and is not noticed by Garcin de Tassy or any other Tazkira writer. It is only stated by Mir Hasan in his account of himself in the memoirs of Urdu poets compiled by him.

Qasidas.

There are other Manavis one set of which consists of a satire on a butcher, another relates to the story of a minstrel and the third, to the story of a courtesan. He has written a few qasidas or panegyrics on Nawab Salar Jung, on the marriage of Nawab Asafuddaulah, and another which contains anecdotes of Mohammadan saints. About seven of his qasidas are now extant.

Mir Hasan speaks in his account of himself of having written Marsia or threnodies on the death of Imam Husain and Hasan. He also wrote soz and salaams which are forms of Marsias. This kind of composition was brought into perfection by his grandson Mir Anis and his contemporary and rival, Dabir.

Marsia.

He wrote a Tazkira of Urdu poets in Persian which contains an account of about 300 poets ancient and modern. The date of the composition is not mentioned but an examination of various dates mentioned in the body of the Tazkira points to 1194 A. H. (1780 A. D.) as the most approximate date of composition, when Sauda was seventy years of age. Mir Hasan has divided the memoir into three periods : the first period anterior to the reign of Furrukhsiyyar ; the second period from the reign of Furrukhsiyyar to the end of the reign of Mohammad Shah ; and the third and last period till the compilation of the Tazkira. It has the merit of writing accounts of poets alive in the time of Hasan and though the sketches run only to a few lines yet they are not without their value.

Tazkira of Urdu poets.

Mir Hasan has immortalized himself by his Masnavi *Sihar-ul-Bayan* and ranks very high in Urdu Literature for his simplicity, spontaneity, eloquence, sweetness, melody and erotic themes which often touch on sensualism and is thus considered by Insha to be a fore-runner of the writers of rekhti.

Mir Mohammad Taqi whose *nom de guerre* is Mir and who is generally known as Mir Taqi, was the son of Mir Abdullah, one of the nobles of Akbar-abad (Agra). He quitted Agra at an early age on the death of his father, during the reign of the Emperor Shah Alam, and resided with his uncle Khan Arzu (Sirajuddin) the celebrated Persian poet, who supported him and supervised his education. He also instructed him in the act of writing poetry. He rapidly rose to fame and his verses were on the lips of everybody. His ghazals were taken from city to city as valuable presents. Poets are proverbially poor and Mir was no exception. His proud and supersensitive nature did not allow him to court the patronage of the nobles at Delhi which was staggering at the various shocks delivered by the repeated foreign invasions of the Afghans and the frequent free-booting incursions of the Mahrattas. In a state of utter poverty, like most of the brethren of his tribe, Mir left Delhi for Lucknow in the time of Nawab Asafuddaulah. According to Azad he left Delhi in 1190 A. H. (1776 A. D.) but according to Lutf it was in 1197 A. H. (1783 A. D.) Garcin de Tassy follows Lutf, and Sprenger also says that it was after 1196 A. H. Hasan says in

Mir Taqi Mir 1125 of 1223 A. H. 1793 to 1810 A. D.

Leaves for Lucknow 1197 A. H. or 1783 A. D.

his Tazkira that Mir was in Delhi at the time of the compilation of the biography (1194 A. H. or 1780 A. D.). The authorities therefore lean towards the date stated by Lutf which appears to be the correct one. Mir had not enough money to engage the whole of the coach to himself and he shared it with a gentleman, who to beguile the tedium of the journey commenced some small talk. Mir feeling offended at being addressed, peremptorily snubbed him at once. When he arrived at Lucknow he put up at an inn and hearing that a *Mushaira* was to be held in the evening he hastily composed a ghazal in the particular refrain set by the assembly and having dressed himself in the fashion of Delhi which was not in vogue at Lucknow he proceeded to the scene of poetical contest. Such an old figure dressed grotesquely in old fashion excited the laughter of the smart people of Lucknow which cut the old man to the quick. When his turn came to recite the ghazal people began to make enquiries from Mir about himself. Mir improvised a few couplets in the set refrain and incorporated them in his ghazal which he read out with much feeling and pathos. People apologised when they knew it was the great Mir who had come amongst them. In the course of time Nawab Asafuddaulah heard of Mir's arrival and assigned to him a monthly cash allowance of two hundred or three hundred rupees according to Lutf, which was also continued by his successor Nawab Saadat Ali Khan (1798-1814 A. D.).

Mir however thought himself affronted by some seeming supercilious acts of the Nawab and, according to Azad, retired early from the court and died in utter poverty and starvation, 1225 A. H. (1810 A. D.). Lutf adds a few more details about Mir. A few celebrated Urdu writers were required for Fort William College at Calcutta from Lucknow and Delhi and Mir was also interviewed by Colonel Scott, the Resident, but he was passed over owing to his infirmity and old age. Lutf also adds that when he fell out with Nawab Asafuddaulah the pension of three hundred rupees which had been fixed by Nawab and entrusted to be disbursed by Tahsin Ali Khan was not stopped when he ceased to attend the court but continued to be paid in its entirety until 1215 A. H. (1800 A. D.) (the year of the compilation of the Tazkira of Lutf). Lutf however mentions that Mir was not properly appreciated and he lacked the night's morsel which is probably an oriental hyperbole for comparative neglect considering the patronage lavishly bestowed on minor lights and his own attainments as a poet.

There is a conflict of statements as regards the age of Mir. The date of his death is firmly fixed by the numerous chronogrammatic verses composed by various poets, the most notable being those of Nassakh and Nasikh. According to Azad he attained the

age of one hundred years (lunar) ; according to Jahan, Mir was only eighty. The latter statement seems to be incorrect as Mushaffi when writing his biography in 1209 A. H. (1794-95 A. D.) says that Mir was then over eighty years of age.

Only a few scanty-details which are authentic are available about Mir's life. Sprenger however mentions that in the years (1848-50 A. D.) when he made the catalogue of the books in the libraries of Kings of Oudh he noticed in the Moti Mahal an autobiography of Mir Taqi (152 pages of 12 lines) bearing the title of 'Zikr Mir' or account of Mir written in Persian. This valuable work seems to have been lost otherwise it would have thrown a flood of light and dealt a *coup de grace* to a great mass of incorrect speculation, fanciful stories and legends that have gathered round his name as round Chaucer's. Various conjectures and canards set afloat by people were incorporated by the contemporary chroniclers and sedulously propagated by other writers who based their information on these not very trust-worthy biographies. Mir does not write about himself in his *Nakat-ush-Shaura* with well assumed humility and in conformity with the ruling convention of the oriental poets. He only states that he is staying at Delhi.

Was Mir Taqi a Syed ?

The Tazkirah of Shaurish which was the poetical surname of Gulam Hussain Shaurish, composed about 1193 A. H. (1779 A. D.) when Mir was alive and in Delhi, states that Mir was not a born Syed but he only assumed the poetical pseudonym of Mir (a title peculiarly used by the Syeds) and thus he came to be regarded as a Syed. Shaurish relies upon a Qita of Sauda which is not to be found in his works. This is an idle story quoted by Azad and there is absolutely no doubt of Mir being a Syed by birth as he frequently states so in his verses and refers to his noble descent and he was believed to be so by other contemporary chroniclers.

Inaccuracies about Mir in the Ab-i-Hiyat of Moulana Azad.

Azad, in his admirable but unfortunately occasionally gossipy Ab-i-Hiyat has allowed certain misstatements to creep in. He has related anecdotes and sayings of Mir illustrative of his ill-nature, supercilious temper, overweening conceit and uncritical attitude. He has also allowed himself to give currency to some incorrect statements on the authority of some of his ill-informed malicious contemporary writers. In order to make the book entertaining he did not pause to verify his facts and stories. Their veracity is now challenged in the light of *Nakat-ush-Shaura* (pithy sayings of the poets) and other contemporary tazkiras which were not easily accessible then.

According to Azad, Mir states in his preface to *Nakat-ush-Shaura* that it deals with an account of one thousand poets, and that it gives useful hints to writers of Urdu verses. The preface of Mir does profess nothing of the kind. Azad states that every

one of those poets treated in the Tazkirah has come in for his share of rebuke and his account of Wali the progenitor of rekhta poetry is simply scandalous as Mir writes about him that he is "more notorious than Satan". The biography contains only an account of hundred poets and the criticism is neither unfair nor malicious. Mir, contrary to the oriental custom, does not indulge too much in extravagant hyperbole and strained metaphors. His criticism is short, pointed and on the whole just. He has disclaimed personal knowledge when he did not know the man. There are very few reproofs and most of them are well-merited. There is no mention of any ill-natured remark about Wali as is quoted by Azad. Again, according to Azad, Mir a Shiah and his uncle Arzu, a follower of Hanafi sect, quarrelled and became estranged owing to their religious differences but there appears to be no shade of annoyance or intolerance on the part of Mir. He speaks very reverently of Khan Arzu, and indeed of all other leaders of religion. He calls Khan Arzu his spiritual guide and 'Pir' and writes with the veneration of a disciple. It is abundantly clear that Mir was no bigot in his views and had tolerance and respect for the persuasions of others. It is possible that the estrangement may have come later on in life but he could never have spoken bitterly against him. Azad's account that Mir usurped the poetical surname of Mir, from Mir Soz, seems to be unfounded for Mir himself states that he had been using it long before Mir Soz assumed it but he gave it up for that of Soz when he saw that he would be eclipsed by the greater glory of Mir Taqi. Of Dard, Mir speaks in the choicest terms and with the greatest respect. Azad again speaks of Mir's contemptuous treatment of people who resided outside Delhi and who were thus supposed to have no knowledge of the purity of Urdu. On the contrary Mir praises whole-heartedly the work of poets not residents of Delhi. Mazmun of Chachau a village near Agra has been accorded good treatment.

Mir's nature.

It is true that Mir had an overwhelming sense of self-respect and was proud and sensitive by nature. He looked askance at the advances of the nobles which he thought were meant to humiliate him. He was intensely reserved and self-centred and would brook no presumption. His poverty embittered his spirit and his lofty nature disdained pity and help. He was however irascible and short-tempered and he was himself conscious of the defect as he expressed in one of his couplets and as is referred to by his contemporaries Hasan and Lutf. True it is that he speaks of his poems and Tazkira as 'more worthless than shells' and refers to his pupils as his friends but this depreciation and abasement of self is only a pose and originates in pride. It may be inferred that he was conceited and vain about his accomplishments as a poet and was partial to friends. His masnâvi *Ajgar Nāmah* or 'book of Dragon' in which he regards

himself a dragon destroying all other animals (minor poets) is not a mere conventional performance but an expression of inordinate vanity and disdain for others. His contemptuous treatment of Hatim in his biography can be traced to the same source. He was very often generous as he praises unstintedly his contemporary Sauda, and some of his own disciples. Azad seems to have embroidered in this weakness to an amazing extent for he states that Mir could never brook greatness of others ancient or modern and would never shake his head in token of praise even when verses of such masters of Persian poetry as Saadi and Hafiz were recited in his presence. Azad does not seem to have read the Nakat in original but has taken the statements of others on trust especially those of Qasim.

His works.

Mir Taqi was a voluminous writer. He lived to a ripe old age and his literary activities extended over a very long period. His works are :—

(1) Six large diwans of Rekhta ghazals.

(2) A diwan in Persian.

(3) Numerous masnavis.

(4) A pamphlet entitled Faiz-i-Mir.

(5) A Tazkirah entitled *Nakat-ush-shaura.*

The diwans of Urdu ghazals contain not only ghazals, but rubais, mustzads, wasokhts, mukhammasat, tarjihbands, tarkibbands, musaddasat, matlat, haftbands, tazmin, fards and other varieties of composition. The diwans extend to many hundred pages and the ghazals number thousands.

Mir has written a few qasidas which are not of a very high order and suffer in comparison with those of his rival Sauda. Four of them are invocatory in character and only one in praise of Nawab Asafuddaulah. This form of composition did not attract him for his genius was not suited to it and his views and mode of life did not permit him to play the sycophant on nobles and Nawabs. It was also due to the fact that he was self-centred and reserved.

Some of his mukhammasat are invocatory and others are on the 'complaint of time' which are regarded as satires on Shah Alam and his court.

Next to his ghazals, rank his masnavis, which are numerous consisting chiefly of satires, eulogies, and love tales and which are extremely popular. The most important of them are :—

1. *Ajgarnama* also called Azhdarnama or 'the book of the dragon' is the ebullition of Mir's self-conceit and contempt for his contemporary Urdu poets. He fancifully represents himself as a dragon devouring the smaller animals, such as scorpions,

snakes, etc., within his reach, to wit the poets whose works he held in such light esteem.

2. *Shola-i-Ishq* or 'The Flame of Love.'
3. *Josh-i-Ishq* or 'The Ebullition of Love.'
4. *Darya-i-Ishq*, or 'The Ocean of Love.'
5. *Aijaz-i-Ishq* or 'The Miracle of Love.'
6. *Khuab-o-Khayal* or 'The Dream and Thought.'
7. *Mamlat-i-Ishq* or 'The Transactions of Love.'
8. *Masnavi Tambih-ul-Khayal* which praises the art of poetry and its dignity.

Three masnavis with the heading *Shikarnamah* describe the hunting expeditions of Nawab Asafuddaulah. There are many short masnavis on pets, such as cocks, cats, goats, dogs ; one on monsoon and another on his own house devastated by rain, on the troubles of journey in rains, on lying, and delights of wine. There is a *Saqi Namah* or the Book of the Cup-bearer of wine which has Spring for its subject.

He also wrote a few Marsias but had no love for chronogrammatic verses.

Mir introduced new forms in Urdu poetry.

To Mir belongs the credit of transplanting ***Wasokht***, ***Mussullus*** and *Murabba* in Urdu poetry. *Tazmin* (the word means to intercalate in one's own verses those of somebody else. This name is given to pieces of verses where the intercalation takes place) also figures in the works of Mir.

Mir's fame chiefly rests on his ghazals and masnavis. The masnavis though not of the highest order are marked with spontaneity, emotion, freedom from constraint, eloquence and elegance of diction. Later poets such as Juraat and Mushaffi imitated them. They could not however be ranked with those of Mir Hasan.

The Diwan in Persian was compiled in one year as Mushaffi informs us, when he had suspended composing in Urdu.

Nakat-ush-shaura about 1752 A. D.

The Tazkira entitled *Nakat-ush-shaura* was written about the year 1165 A. H. (1752 A. D.). It is one of the earliest memoirs of Urdu poets and is exceedingly interesting and useful. It is unfortunately fragmentary. It also poses as an anthology for it contains selections from the verses of poets treated therein.

His service to the language and poetry.

Mir introduced into Urdu poetry many idioms, phrases and words from Persian. He used these in two different ways. He either transplanted the idiom in its original form or did so by its translation into Urdu. Many examples are quoted by Azad in his Ab-i-Hayat. Many gained currency and survived, others fell out from use and died.

His own ideas about rekhta embodied in the epilogue of his Nakat are interesting and instructive. "Be it known that rekhta is of several kinds, which I will explain to the extent of my knowledge. Firstly, one hemistich is Persian and one Hindi like the fragment of Amir Khusru. Secondly, half the hemistich is Persian and the other half Hindi, like the verses of Mir Moizz. Thirdly, the verbs and prepositions are Persian but this is objectionable. Fourthly, they use Persian construction ; this is allowable to the extent it agrees with the construction of the rekhta idiom—this is known only to the poets—but if it is contrary to Rekhta grammar it is objectionable. It is to be observed that this is one of the methods followed by poets and that I have equally adopted it. If the Persian construction is in the spirit of the Rekhta language there is no harm in adopting it. Fifthly, Ahyam was much in vogue with former poets but now it is no longer in use. There is no harm in it, if it is witty and natural. Ahyam means that the word in which the meaning of the verse depends has two significations, one obvious and the other far-fetched, and it is the latter which is intended by the poet. The style which I have adopted comprises all the figures of speech, as puns, resemblance of corresponding words in rhyme and measure, etc."

His ghazals.

Urdu poetry is popularly regarded to be co-extensive with Urdu ghazal and as Mir is pre-eminent as a ghazal writer he is naturally regarded to be the greatest of Urdu poets. He brought masnavis to a high pitch of excellence but Mir's sphere is the ghazal and in his domain he reigns supreme. His verses are simple, eloquent, poignant, winged with pathos and pain. They have the greatest appealing power and force. In the ardour of passion, in the melody and music, in the felicity of phrase, in the ecstasy of feeling, his ghazals rank the best in Urdu literature. Many of his verses have that haunting quality which is regarded as a hall-mark of true and great poetry. His seventy-two 'lancets' have passed into a proverb though there are certainly a greater number of verses which could be regarded as possessed of the highest poetic qualities. His language is pure and chaste and his style extremely simple and highly polished. He is the Sheikh Saadi of Urdu ghazals. His ghazals are the elixir of Urdu poetry. Of short metres he is a master. There is an air of despondency and sadness which invests the poems with thousand charms. This dejection lends sweetness and true pathos to the ghazals.

His reputation as a poet.

Mir's position is unequalled in the history of Urdu literature. He is popularly called Khuda-i-Sakhun or 'God of poetry.' Ghalib and Nasikh and all subsequent writers of note have acknowledged his greatness and speak of him as of a master. Even in his own day Mir was recognised as the greatest ghazal-writer. The contemporary and

later biographers bestow the highest encomiums on Mir and his poetry. Extravagant and out-of-way metaphors, far-fetched similes, picturesque phraseology, are lavished on him abundantly in praise. Poets and prose-writers vie with each other in eulogising him. No praise is too little for him. Domains of Art and Nature are ransacked and they furnish similes for his greatness. Mythological and historical allusions are yoked to do service for him. Hasan writes, "The chief of the poets of Hindustan, the most eloquent of the eloquents of his time, a heart-attracting poet, and an incomparable writer of verses". Lutf in comparing him to poets, ancient and modern, says that the difference is that of Sun and Moon; earth and sky. Mir and Mirza (Sauda) are the standards for and fountains of inspiration for later Urdu poets. For his sweetness, for his poignancy, force and appeal, for his eloquence and spontaneity, for his songs of woe, Mir is one of the greatest of Urdu poets and as bringing the ghazal to a very high pitch of excellence he ranks with the greatest of writers of erotic verse.

Mir and Sauda compared.

Mir's fame rests on ghazals and masnavis, and Sauda is regarded as the master of Qasida and satire. Even in Sauda's day this was the general impression for Hakim Qudrat Ullah Khan Qasim writes, "It is generally thought that Sauda never approached Mir in the excellence of the ghazal, but 'every flower has a different colour and a different fragrance'. Mirza is a boundless river, Mir is a majestic canal. In the knowledge of verse-technique and prosody Mir has a superiority over Mirza, but in poetic powers and genius Mirza surpasses Mir. Khwajah Basit characterizes the works of Mir as Ah: Dear Dear (a sigh), and those of Mirza as Wah: Hear Hear (an exclamation of delight). The same difference has been embodied in one of his verses by Amir Minai.

Both were born poets of great powers. The difference in the style is the difference of the temperament. Mir was by nature a confirmed pessimist. His life was one of long misery and poverty. He was overweighted with an inordinate sense of self-respect. He carried his *amor propre* too far and to extreme limits. He led a retired and embittered life. He drank copiously of the gall of life. He was no fit associate for a riotous and festive board. Hilarity, uproariousness, and joy were alien to his nature. Sauda, on the contrary, was essentially an optimist and possessed a volatile temperament. He was bubbling with delight and good humour. He was in his element in a joyous assembly, and delighted in the play of wit and fancy. He took life easily and was never known to be in straitened circumstances. The poetry of each is coloured by his thoughts and reflects his temperament and his attitude towards the world. The language they adopted suited their respective genius and temper. Pathos speaks in

simple, subdued, gentle and unadorned language. The utterance is choked with tears. This style, natural and easy, is admirably suited to the ghazal and to particular metres notably the short ones in which Mir is seen at his best. The qasida requires picturesque phraseology, dignified diction, sublime similes and rare metaphors. An encomiastic ode could never be sung with a drooping heart. Languishing sentiments of love describing the agonies of separation and tortures of suspicion could never be befittingly expressed with words suited to qasidas. Mir is the supreme master of the pathetic and simple style. His poignant verses thrill with emotion which is real and not simulated. His thoughts are drawn from the fund of his own personal experiences and not from his imagination. Mir's life was a tragedy and Shelley's lines could apply to him with great aptness and force.

> "Most wretched men
> Are cradled into poetry by wrong.
> They learn in suffering what they
> teach in song ".

" His sweetest songs are those which tell of saddest thoughts ". Sauda's verses have not that impress of true pathos. Mir's verses make a powerful appeal to a bruised and agonised heart. His is a tale of woe. He depicts beautifully and faithfully that aspect of life which has despair and sorrow in all their purity. Sauda, on the other hand, portrays another aspect, that of hope and joy. His verses scatter delight and hilarity. His genius refused to be confined to a limited sphere. He transcended the narrow plane of human emotions and sought for a larger and fuller life. He explored new fields and his verses may be compared to bouquets of variegated flowers of diverse hues and fragrance. He allowed free play to other emotions and thoughts. Mir's world is full of gloom and sorrow. There is no gleam to relieve its despondency and agony. His verses bear the motto " Abandon all hope ye that enter here". His laughs are sardonic and have a bitter ring and his sarcasm is mordant. It is incorrect to say that Mir never attempted the satire and the qasida. He tried and proved a failure as his genius did not lie that way. It is futile to say that he never entered the lists owing to his sturdy independence and indifference to power and pelf. He did write *Ajgar-Namah* which does not even approach the fine satires of Sauda replete with generic pictures of Indian life. His panegyric on Nawab Asafuddaulah is a poor performance in comparison to the majestic qasidas of Sauda.

Both Mir and Sauda have mastery in portraying the original faithfully and to perfection They are supreme artists who mirror ideas in verses so truthfully and with such wealth of detail that the picture presented in words stands as a real thing before

the mind's eye. The portrayal may be subjective or objective, of emotions or of landscapes. In depicting the emotional side of human nature especially, the sad and the pathetic, Mir stands pre-eminent. Sauda had a mastery over every kind of emotion though he had not such a grip over the pathetic as Mir had. He was also equipped with an intimate and vast knowledge of the subjects which he could call forth to help him in the presentation of the picture. Mir's despondent nature, retired habits and brooding mind, self-absorbed and hypercritical, did not permit him to scour widely over the field of human nature. The narrow outlook of Mir was the outcome of his concentration and proud temper. He wooed his muse with all the fervour and intensity of an ardent lover. Such was his self-effacement and his self-extinction, in work that he did not notice for seven whole years a garden over which his sitting room looked out. Such absorption, to the exclusion of everything else must result in high artistic work in its own circumscribed domain. Mir however lacks the versatility of genius which is the greatest of gifts to Sauda. Sauda paints life as he found it in gay and grave colours. Mir's world was full of utter gloom. The flowers were faded and decaying. Pain, sorrow and misery stalked in the land. There is an atmosphere of depression and darkness. The relief is sought in inaction, by indulgence in tears, by escaping into dreams, mostly gloomy, of his own creation. Sauda's world is the real world where gleam intermingled with gloom, where the garden is green, where the Zephyr plays merrily with the flowers who nod to its wafts and glisten in the sunshine with which the garden is bathed. In Mir there are few pictures of nature in its gay mood.

Similes and metaphors are essential to poetry and especially to oriental poetry. These symbols are decorations which if skilfully used, enhance the beauty of the verse. Sauda is the master artist who uses them adroitly and with striking effect. Such fresh, sublime and beautiful similes and metaphors are comparatively few in the works of Mir and occur more abundantly in those of Sauda. Sauda also scores over Mir in his knowledge of the various arts and sciences and his skill in utilising them into the service of his poems.

It is perfectly true that Sauda's ghazals occasionally lapse into exordiums of qasidas. This is more or less due to his powerful imagination, which plays him false and betrays him into themes and words not fit for ghazals. His vigour cannot be curbed, his fancy cannot be restrained. Mir is free from such blemishes. These verses of Sauda may militate against the canons laid down for the composition of ghazals but they are full of merit and beauty if considered singly and independently. It must also be remembered that this non-observance of the rules about the composition of ghazals is in conformity with the practice of later masters of Persian verse who served as guides to Urdu writers. The last

phase of the development of Persian poetry saw the enrichment of the ghazal with various other topics besides love. Philosophy, religion, ethics, sufism, science and art were laid under contribution. Love was reduced to a science. Urdu poetry, a handmaid of Persian, could not escape the last heritage. It must however be admitted that these themes appeal to the intellect and leave the heart untouched and so lose in emotional character. There is however a difference between the grandeur of a qasida and the grandeur of a ghazal and the difference is seen most markedly in the works of novices who attempt to accomplish what only master-artists such as Sauda and Ghalib can achieve.

Both Sauda and Mir are masters of harmony. Their verses are compact, terse and denuded of superfluous words. Sauda paid more attention to the arrangement of words in a verse. He tried to make a verse complete in itself which requires greater skill in versification. Very rarely an ellipse is found in the meaning. Both avoid far-fetched metaphors and obscure allusions though Sauda occasionally errs on this side.

The comparison is very useful and valuable as both flourished at the same time and wrote in the same forms of poetry. They frequently composed odes in the same measure with the same rhymes and double-rhymes and the comparison is both interesting and illustrative of their temperament and outlook on life. Both suffer from the faults of that age. Both sometimes used debased words and indecent language. Occasionally the subject-matter of the verses is indecent. There is a disparity of genders and tenses in verses, the defect is technically known as *Shutar Gurba* (camel and cat). There are vapid and indifferent verses in the diwans of both. Mir occasionally employs Ahyam. Both frequently indulge in the adoration of youths, a very disagreeable feature of the poetry of that time.

In the width of vision, in versatility of genius, in his mastery over details, in his knowledge of the world, in his *bon homie*, in his sense of humour Sauda is superior to Mir. In simplicity of style, in the domain of love, in the treatment of the sad and the tragic, in Sufism, in eloquence Mir reigns supreme and excels Sauda. "The works of both are priceless treasures. Mir has got only diamonds: Sauda possesses diamonds but also has pearls, emeralds, rubies, sapphires. The final authority is the taste and temperament of the critic."

Other minor poets.

Many poets flourished during this period. Their names are legion and they are too unimportant to be mentioned here. They may be looked for by the curious in the various tazkiras, which have been compiled during this period or subsequently. There is nothing distinctive about their works.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DELHI SCHOOL OF URDU POETS, PART III

THE AGE OF INSHA AND MUSHAFFI.

Is the division into periods arbitrary.

The division into periods is not so arbitrary as it looks. It is true that most of the poets who flourished during this period were contemporaries of those of the preceding age but they were young and had not attained that celebrity which fell to their lot later on. Moreover by reason of the language employed, this age saw a marked improvement in the diction of the previous age. Many old forms were discarded and the new forms were polished. Insha essayed his experiments with the language. Mushaffi favoured the old and carried on the traditions. Juraat tried to follow Mir as a ghazal writer.

Greater and wider court patronage.

This age was a prelude of the next as Urdu poetry begins to be linked to the court. The poets of an earlier age though they enjoyed pensions and stipends always maintained their independence and never sank into the position of a glorified servant. The poets of this age enjoyed greater patronage but surrendered their honour. Poetry was a source of enjoyment to please the ears of their masters. They pandered to the taste of their patrons. They were jokers and buffoons first and poets afterwards. Poetry was only a means to an end. The poets aspired to be the boon companions of their patrons. This subservience resulted in straining relations between poets. Up till now the poets were not swayed by sordid considerations and kept their poetic combats within bounds of decorum. Now there was a general scramble for the favours of the patron. The poets became jealous and envious of each other and harmonious relations were no longer possible. The quarrels of Insha, Mushaffi and Juraat which developed into scuffles are a blot on the pages of the history of this period.

Decadence in the purity of the sentiment of Urdu Ghazal.

With the bondage of Urdu poetry, decadence set in. Court-ridden, it could not find scope for its development. There was no purity of sentiment. The spiritual side was forgotten. The beloved celebrated in verses was not the Eternal One but a courtesan, a dancing girl who could be found in great numbers in the court of the pleasure-loving Nawabs. They revelled in sensualism more openly because they were cheered in the dissolute courts with greater zeal and were recipients of greater rewards from the nobles and Nawabs. This was not the practice in Delhi. The poets, although they were recipients of pension, retained their independence. Poetry was linked up with piety. It was consecrated. It throve in sanctuaries of the pious. Shah

Gulshan exercised great influence on Wali. Dard and Mazhar who were great spiritualists fostered poetry and advanced its cause. In Lucknow poetry left the protection of shrines and sanctuaries of the holy men and became attached to the Durbar. Poets were no longer saints but were durbaris and courtiers. It is true that for a time the *emigres* from Delhi maintained exclusiveness, but gradually the lure of wealth, popularity and favour won them to their fold, and the rising generation was completely under the spell of court.

The Rekhti.

A new form of composition, allied to this decay came into existence. The court influence is clearly traceable in the rekhti, the originator of which was Nawab Saadat Yarkhan Rangin who had early graduated in licentiousness and had run through every phase of sensuality and debauchery. Such compositions in the language of the harem were treated as a huge joke and were meant to delight the ears of his dissolute companions. They are lewdness and profligacy versified. Insha also contributed his share.

An increase of literary skill but a decrease of emotional value.

The age saw a greater mastery of versification. Constant practice gave the poets of this age a greater command over technique. They made up in skill what they lost in purity and loftiness. To show off their cleverness they indulged in stiff measures with stiff rhymes and composed not one but many ghazals in difficult metres. The verses are marvels of literary skill but they have no emotional value and do not move the reader at all. They are examples of clever performances and as such prepare the way for the artificiality of the school of Nasikh.

Satire sinks into filthy abuse.

The poets no longer fought literary battles ; they fought for their bread with satires as their weapons. The poetic combats sank into court squabbles. There must be a deadly quarrel between Mushaffi and Insha because Insha ousted Mushaffi as an *Ustad* of Prince Suleiman Shikoh. They abused each other, wrote scurrilous burlesques and filthy lampoons. Their patrons enjoyed the fun, fanned the fire by applauding their disgraceful performances. Such a scramble for court favours was sure to prove highly damaging to Urdu poetry. Oftentimes pens were exchanged for bludgeons and even swords. The satires of Insha and Mushaffi are a slur on Urdu literature and are simply ribald vituperation strung in verse.

First Grammar by an Indian.

To Insha we owe the first grammar of Urdu by an Indian entitled *Darya-i-Latafat* or the Ocean of Eloquence.

Insha died 1233 A. H. or 1817 A. D.

Syed Insha Allah Khan, son of Syed Hakim Mir Mashaallah Khan, poetically surnamed Insha, belonged to a noble stock of Syeds of Najaf who

migrated to Delhi and settled there. They were held in high esteem as nobles of the Moghul court. Insha's father was a court physician and a poet of some note having the pet-name of *Masdar.* He migrated to Murshidabad, the headquarters of the Nawab of Bengal owing to the disruption of the Moghul kingdom at Delhi, and was welcomed there with honour and dignity. Syed Insha was born at Murshidabad. His father instructed him in the various arts and sciences but he did not take regular lessons in the art of composing verses from his father but depended mainly upon his own genius and skill. In the beginning of his career as a poet, his father corrected his verses but he was not his pupil for any considerable period of time. Insha left Murshidabad and came to Delhi in the time of Shah Alam II who was now a poverty-stricken figure-head. Shah Alam was a poet-king and patron of poets and he welcomed Insha to his court, shorn of grandeur and wealth. Insha soon entered into the spirit of the court, became a centre of activities and kept the Emperor perpetually charmed by his attractive personality, sparkling *bons mots* and witty conversation. Feeling disgusted with the poverty of the court, finding no adequate recognition of his poetical talents, and smarting under the machinations of court rivalries and intrigues, and tired of the acrimonious controversies with poets of Delhi notably Mirza Azam Beg, a pupil of Sauda, Insha left for Lucknow, the refuge of the vagrant poets from Delhi and other places. He sought service with Mirza Suleiman Shikoh who was poetically inclined and has left a Diwan, and who delighted in collecting poets at his miniature court. Insha worked his way into his favours by his geniality and impromptu verses, and supplanted his rival Mushaffi as a poetical master of Mirza Suleiman Shikoh. Insha was not however satisfied and hungered for a fuller recognition of his talents and he sought an introduction to the court of Nawab Saadat Yar Khan of Lucknow through the medium of Tafazzul Husain Khan. He ingratiated himself into his good books, and became very intimate, keeping the Nawab in perpetual hilarity by his amusing anecdotes and witty verses. His flashing retorts, his playfulness, his inexhaustible fund of good humour endeared him to his Nawab who thought of him as his *alter ego.* His company was always in demand. The seeds of disruption were to be found in this intimacy, for Insha was thrown off his guard and failed to exercise that caution and restraint which is so needful in dealing with a capricious Nawab. Oftentimes he was betrayed into repartees and jokes which grated upon the Nawab and sounded unpleasant to him. He overshot himself in loquacity and failed to minister to the many moods of the Nawab. He was not a perfect barometer and failed to notice the changes in the temper of the Nawab. Temperamentally Insha and the Nawab were also different and being bold and free Insha did not always care to subordinate his likes and dislikes to

those of his master. In sheer fun without meaning to be offensive in any manner, being led away by the spirit of the moment, he happened to cast reflections on the nobility and purity of Nawab's birth. The Nawab's ire was roused and the smouldering fire burst into a flame. This unhappy retort furnished him with a handle and Insha was subjected to severities of a rigorous type. He was virtually made a prisoner and was ordered not to leave his house without the permission of the Nawab. One day, in a fit of despondency and anger, chafing at his restraint he publicly abused the Nawab as he was passing by. His salary was stopped. Misery and poverty entered his house and Insha, once the most sought-after companion, the breath of the nostrils of his master, the delight of his friends, the ornament of scholars, ended his days in ignominy, regret and starvation. He died in 1233 A. H. (1817 A. D.).

His importance.

He had a great command over the language and he carried on the changes that began with Sauda. He was the first Indian to write a grammar of the Urdu language and the care, research and pains that he has bestowed on his work entitled *Darya-i-Latafat* (The Ocean of Eloquence) entitles him to a very high rank. His work is of uneven quality but the best is the most valuable and of great authority. He carried experiments in the language to inordinate lengths. Had he exercised restraint and discretion he would have been acclaimed as a master of the Urdu language.

His style and characteristics.

Insha was extremely witty by nature. He had a fund of good humour which he lavishly expended in conversation and in his verses. The outstanding quality of Insha is his versatility. His was a genius with many facets. He had also the quality of adaptability. He was an erudite scholar with an alert mind but was prone to be humorous. He could ransack the treasures of knowledge hidden in secret nooks of his mind at a moment's notice and could support his contention by some story, argument, verse or authority. He was extremely quick-witted and had an agile fancy which played with the rapidity of lightning. He was a thorough master of Persian and Arabic and used to compose copiously in these languages. He was well versed in Turkish, Pushtu, Poorbi, Punjabi, Marwari, Marathi, Kashmiri and Hindi and wrote verses in these dialects. He was a wonderful linguist with an enormous capacity. His *forte* was *tazmin* or Intercallation of which he was a master. His was an inventive genius which delighted in difficult and novel performances. He wrote some poems no letter of which has a dot. Some of his poems are written with letters, all of which have diacritical points while others have letters which have no diacritical points at all. He is called the Amir Khusru of Urdu for his experiments and ingenious inventions. He always tried stiff

metres to show off his skill in the art of writing verse and his command over the language. Some of his rhymes are very difficult, bizarre and uncommon. These though very clever, sound harsh and discordant, utterly unsuited to ghazals. Humour abounds but it is profuse and unrestrained and instead of enhancing the beauty of the verses renders them ridiculous. Insha laid it on too thick with the effect of converting the verses into burlesques, in order to make them attractive to the common people who thronged the luxurious courts and to the Nawab who revelled in all the delights of a refined and often coarse sensuality. Consequently the humour is broad and seldom subtle and refined. This was the origin of the rekhti compositions in the dialect of women which was the craze of the court, Insha and Rangin leading the way. His coarse humour does not even spare mysticism and the unsavoury blend of humour and sufism is seen in his Masnavi on *Shir Biranj.*

His good qualities are : his thorough command over the language, his versatile genius, his enormous capacity and an alert mind, his profound knowledge, his inventive genius, his love for local colour and his wit and humour. Insha has followed Sauda in introducing Indian themes and words in his Ghazals and has sought the help of Indian imageries and allusions but in a limited manner. His main defect is that he lacked a sense of proportion and had no proper balance of judgment. His work is of uneven quality. There is a dearth of ideas and a profusion of verbiage in his ghazals due more or less to his selection of stiff metres and uncommon rhymes. He shows carelessness and contempt to conform to the canons of the qasida and ghazal. He disdains to exercise restraint on the exuberance of his humour. He occasionally lapses into licentiousness to pander to the passions of the Nawab and his dissolute court. The defects are mostly defects of the times in which he lived. Like the English poets of the Restoration period he mirrors the age in which he flourished. Insha subordinated poetry to his companionship of the Nawab. He was never inspired with his high office as a poet. It was always a means to an end, a source of self-aggrandisement and rapid promotion. He saw no mission. He had no message to deliver. He paid his penalty as a court poet. There was no incentive to write of lofty themes when satires and lampoons were applauded and munificently rewarded. The desire to be a high priest of poetry did not well up from within and the atmosphere of the court did not spur him on to any noble activity. All is, however, not dross and tinsel. Gems are found scattered in his work which compare favourably with the best in others. His qasida in praise of George III is admirable. Betab has remarked : " Poetry gave a deathblow to the scholarship and accomplishments of Insha ; and the companionship of Nawab Saadat Ali Khan proved the ruin of his

poetry." Azad's account of Insha is replete with choice anecdotes which amply repay perusal but which cannot find a place here.

Insha was a prolific writer and he has left voluminous works behind him.

His *kuliyat* comprises of :—

I. A diwan or collection of Urdu ghazals. His ghazals show his mastery over the language but are of uneven quality. Choice idioms, apt constructions, happy wit blend inharmoniously with an utter disregard for rules and canons for ghazals. Some of his verses show great beauty and rank high in Urdu literature.

II. Collection of rekhti ghazals, and rekhti riddles, mustzad, etc.

III. Qasidas in Urdu, in praise of God, Mohammad, leaders of the religion, King of Delhi and various nobles and grandees of the court. They are full of power and majesty but transcend rules and are a jumble of wit and subtlety, full of verses in Arabic, Persian, Hindi and other Indian dialects. The attempt excites ridicule and laughter which may be said to be the anticlimax of qasidas.

IV. Qasidas in Persian which show great command over the language but suffer from the same blemish. Too much wit and humour impair the dignity of the qasidas.

V. Diwan or collection of Persian ghazals which bears testimony to his knowledge of Persian and would have ranked higher if due restraint had been observed.

VI. A Persian masnavi entitled *Shir Biranj*, evidently a burlesque in the style of *Nan o Halwa* of Bahauddin Amli in which he makes fun of spiritualism and mystic themes.

VII. A Persian masnavi on which only those letters are used which have no dots.

VIII. A book in hunting, *Shikarnamah*, describing the *shikar* of Nawab Saadat Ali Khan, written in choice Persian verses which are sweet, melodious, and compact.

IX. Satires on heat, hornets, bugs, flies and vermin; lampoons on Mushaffi and other persons which though often licentious and extravagant are powerful and interesting.

X. A masnavi on the complaint of time, *shikayat-i-zamana*.

XI. A few masnavis in Urdu dealing with amatory themes and celebrating the marriage of two favourite elephants.

XII. Some masnavis satirising some shopkeepers and money-lenders. A masnavi in Urdu entitled ***Murgh-namah*** or Book of the Fowl, describing the methods of rearing fowl.

XIII. An adaptation of an Arabic Masnavi into Persian under the title of ***Mait-ul-Amil.***

XIV. Many distichs, enigmas, quatrains, qitas or chronogrammatic verses, riddles, puns, etc., which are full of wit and humour.

Kahani Theth Hindi men.

Insha is also the author of a tale in prose commonly called "*Kahani Theth Hindi men*" or "a story in pure Hindi idioms." Its value consists in its style which though pure and elegant Urdu and fully intelligible to the Musalmans of Delhi and Lucknow does not contain a single Persian or Arabic word. On the other hand it is equally free from the Sanskriticisms of Pandits. The idioms including the order of the words is distinctly that of Urdu not of Hindi. It extends to about fifty pages and frequently appeared in the series of Indian texts published in Fort William College at Calcutta.

Darya-i-Latafat written in 1222 A. H. or 1802 A. D.

The most important of Insha's works is his *Darya-i-Latafat* or "the Ocean of Eloquence". It is a work in Persian or Urdu grammar and prosody written in collaboration with his coadjutor and friend Qateel. It was composed in 1802 A. D. Insha is responsible for the first part which treats of syntax and grammar of the Urdu language. The second part relating to prosody, rhyme, figures of speech is the work of Qateel. The second part is not so important and valuable as the first. The book is singularly exhaustive and is unique in early productions. It is the first grammar of the Urdu language written by a native of the country. Syed Insha was the first to recognise the importance of Urdu as a language and tried to frame rules. He made searching enquiries into the idiom and origin of words, the pronunciation of various words, the dialect of the Begums which is regarded to be a well of pure Urdu and the idioms peculiar to this language of the zenana. He has appraised with judicious care the influence of various communities on the common language, Urdu. He has stated the rules with great thoroughness and clearness. He has profoundly looked into the alphabets of Urdu and has paid particular attention to the sounds and has consequently put down the number to be eighty-five. He has given specimens of various dialects such as Poorbi, Marwari, etc., and has shown how they influence Urdu. The book is interesting for it gives an account of obsolete words and the current

idioms of the various parts of Delhi. The entire book is written in a humorous style. The standard 'feet' are changed with 'humorous feet'. The rules are presented in the garb of jokes. The irrepressible humour of Insha (Qateel following suit) is allowed full play even in the most serious work. This overindulgence in humour is a grave blemish on his reputation as a poet and a writer. *Darya-i-Latafat* is however invaluable from a philological point of view.

Insha was a writer of great scholarship and great poetic powers. His versatility is unsurpassed. His humour was superabundant which often produced the effect of 'salt in pudding'. He was a great authority on language. Insha ranks high as a great master of Urdu literature.

Juraat died 1225 A. H. or 1810 A. D.

Sheikh Qalandar Bukhsh poetically surnamed Juraat, whose proper name is Yahya Khan Man, was the son of Hafiz Man of Delhi. His ancestors received the title of Man, or Aman according to Lutf, Nassakh and Azad, from the Emperor Akbar. One of them, Rai Aman, was a victim of the sack of Delhi at the time of Nadirshah in 1739 A.D. and the street in which he lived, which is close to the famous Chandni Chowk, is still called after his name.

Juraat spent his early youth at Fyzabad as Hasan mentions in his tazkira. He appears to have left his native city when yet young and at first took service with Nawab Muhabbat Khan, son of Hafiz Rahmat Khan, Nawab of Bareilly. He went to Lucknow in 1215 A. H. (1800 A. D.) and sought the patronage of Mirza Suleiman Shikoh, son of Emperor Shah Alam II. He died in that city in 1225 A. H. (1810 A. D.). Both Nasikh and Nassakh have written chronograms expressing the date of his death.

Juraat was a pupil in poetry of Jaafar Ali Khan Hasrat, a famous Persian and rekhta poet of Delhi. He was a skilled musician and an astrologer of some fame. He played on guitar with great excellence. While still in the prime of life he became blind. Some say that it was due to small-pox; while others relate quite a different story. It is said that he feigned blindness to secure entry into harems and apartments of ladies who were eager to hear his *bons mots* and witty conversation with freedom but who could not do so owing to the *purdah*. Juraat enjoyed this liberty of looking at the ladies but at one time, the mask inadvertently fell off and the infuriated master of the house blinded him. Thus sensuality paid its penalty.

His Diwan.

Juraat was not a scholar. He knew no Arabic and had very little knowledge of the arts and sciences. He was, however, a poet and has left a diwan of ghazals in Urdu and two masnavis. The diwan contains Urdu ghazals, fards, rubayis, musuddusat, mukhammasat, haftband,

tarjihband, gitas, wasokhts, chronogrammatic verses, satires, salaams, marsias and a falnamah. At the end of his two marsias there are chronograms expressing the dates of composition, *viz.*, A. H. 1191 (A. D. 1777) and A. H. 1192 (A. D. 1778) respectively.

Besides these there are two masnavis of sixty-two pages and thirty-two pages, one of them satirises the monsoon and was composed before 1195 A. H. as Hasan mentions it in his tazkira. The second was composed in 1225 A. H. as expressed in a chronogram appended to the masnavi. This masnavi is entitled *Masnavi-i-Husn-o-Ishq* or Masnavi of Beauty and Love and describes the love of Khwajah Hasan, a handsome young gallant and Bakhshi, a charming dancing girl of Lucknow. It is remarkable for its flow, eloquence, diction and spontaneity.

Characteristics of Juraat's poetry—compared with Mir.

Juraat never attempted the qasida and other forms of serious writing. He did not compose in Persian as his contemporaries invariably did. He was eminently a poet of assemblies flowing with wine and lit up with the beauty and laughter of dancing girls. He shone best in amatory verses which were current coin in the courts of the pleasure-seeking nobles and Nawabs. His poems are occasionally licentious and bear the taint of court poetry. He adopted the style of Mir but never sounded the depth of his emotions. Juraat skimmed over the surface. His Ghazals are full of themes describing the blandishments of *bayaderes*, the rivalries and intrigues of her various lovers, the agonies and tortures of the gallant, the apathy of the courtesan, the coquetry and flirtations of the mistress. Both Mir and Juraat are eminently erotic poets. The difference is the difference of quality. Mir's ideals are refined. His love is the love spiritual, transcending worldly desires, merging in mysticism. Juraat's love is of a gross and material kind—a marketable commodity. Mir appeals to the *elite*; Juraat is popular with the common people. The difference lies in the temperament and education of both. Mir with his sober and abstemious habits, having a high sense of self-respect, leading a retired life, self-centred, looked on poetry as a sacred object worthy of the highest veneration. Juraat with his conviviality and 'joy of life' was a poet of the gay court debased in character, regarding poetry as a means to an end, as a weapon for self-aggrandisement, as an instrument to advance his interests, as a source of his livelihood. Poetry to him was but a vehicle to minister to the pleasures of his patron and to endear himself to him. Juraat also lacked the scholarship and learning of Mir and Insha. Notwithstanding the defect of cheapness of sentiment, occasional lapses into licentiousness, lack of lofty flights and profound thoughts, his verses are flowing and eloquent and his style is simple and elegant. Mir's remarks about Juraat's ghazals in a

poetical assembly are shrewd and penetrating:—"Juraat, you do not know how to write true poetry, you only describe your kissing and hugging." Juraat was by no means a poet of a high order. His attachment to the court proved his ruin as it did of Insha. The disaster was greater in his case as, unlike Insha he was not overweighted with learning. Juraat contributed nothing to the development of Urdu poetry. He complacently followed the paths chalked out by his predecessors. He is regarded as having supplied Urdu poetry with the element of love. This is not strictly correct. He was certainly the first who pandered to the common taste by indulging into sentiments, by no means sublime or refined, and which find an echo in the notable poet of Delhi of a later date—Dagh. In fact there is a great resemblance between the two poets in their diction, style and sentiments. Juraat is remarkable for the flow, simplicity and sweetness of his verses, and as such is entitled to a high rank in the second grade poets of Urdu literature.

Mushaffi 1164 A. H. to 1240 A. H. (1750 A. D. to 1824 A. D.).

Sheikh Ghulam Hamadani, poetically surnamed Mushaffi, son of Sheikh Wali Mohammad, was born at Akbarpur and belonged to a respectable family of Amroha in the district of Moradabad. He left his native city in 1190 A. H. (1776 A. D.) in early manhood and went to Delhi to study the art of poetry, Persian and Urdu. He closely applied himself to his studies and such was his enthusiasm for books that he used to borrow them and make copious notes from them for his future reference. He attained celebrity as early as 1195 A. H. (1781 A. D.) as he is mentioned with esteem in the tazkira of Mir Hasan. He convened poetical assemblies at his house which were attended by all the eminent poets of Delhi including Insha, Juraat and Mir Hasan.

After residing for twelve years at Delhi Mushaffi, following the example of the poets proceeded to Lucknow, at the time of Asafuddaulah, where he settled and sought service with Mirza Suleiman Shikoh, the son of the Emperor Shah Alam. Before coming to Lucknow he stayed at Tanda with Nawab Mohammad Yar Khan. It is stated by Ishqi in his tazkira which was completed about 1215 A. H. that Mushaffi also supported himself by commerce. According to Azad Mushaffi died in 1240 A. H. (1824 A. D.) and was about eighty years of age when he compiled his last diwan Sheftah, the author of the *Gulshan-i-Bekhar*, written in 1250 A. H. also states in his notice of the poet that he died ten years ago. According to Hasrat, Mushaffi was born in 1164 A. H. and died at the age of seventy-six.

His works.

Mushaffi was a very prolific writer both in Persian and Urdu. Before 1209 A. H. (1794 A. D.) he had composed two Persian diwans, one in answer to Naziri Neshapuri and the other containing original poems. He also wrote two other

Persian diwans, one in the style of Jalal Asir, and another in the style of Nasir Ali but both these Diwans were stolen from him. Only one of his Persian diwans is now extant and spoken of by the tazkira writers. He wrote a tazkira of Persian poets and a part of the Shahnama which comes down to the genealogy of Shah Alam.

Tazkira of Urdu poets 1209 A. H. (1794 A. D.)

Mushaffi's fame chiefly rests on his voluminous Urdu diwans and his tazkira of Urdu poets. He is the author of eight Urdu diwans comprising of thousands of ghazals, numerous qasidas, quatrains, chronogrammatic verses and diverse other forms of composition then much practised. He also wrote two tazkiras of Urdu poets in Persian, one of them written in 1209 A. H. (1794 A. D.) is available and is very useful. It contains fairly full notices of three hundred and fifty Urdu poets who flourished from the time of Mohammad Shah to his own, paying particular attention to the biographies of his contemporaries with most of whom he was personally acquainted, together with extracts from their writings. The preface and biographical notices are in Persian. It was written at the request of Mir Mustahsan Khaliq, son of Mir Hasan. Much of what Mushaffi wrote is not available because he used to sell his ghazals which were recited by the purchaser under their own pseudonyms.

Characteristics of his poetry.

The great quality of Mushaffi is his wonderful facility in writing verses. Such was his skill and ease that whenever he wrote verses, people thought that he was merely copying from some book. For his poetical assemblies, he used to compose hundreds of verses which would be sold to any purchaser. The remainder, after some final touches would be recited by Mushaffi. In his fecundity lay the seeds of his decay. He could not bestow the same effort on his verses as was required for a work of art. Mushaffi is also regarded as a great Ustad with numerous pupils. Hasrat mentions over a score of his pupils of note chief amongst whom are Atish, Zamir, Aishi, Shahidi, Khaliq and Aseer. Most of the leading poets of the later age are his pupils directly or indirectly. Even Nasikh can be linked up through Mohammad Isa Tanha who is said to have advised him in the art of writing poetry. The testimony of Mushaffi seems conclusive. In the preface of his sixth diwan he writes, "a portion of the bounty of this banquet has been received by Sheikh Nasikh who is a friend of Mohammad Isa who is a devoted disciple of this Fakir". The vast number of his pupils testifies to the great reputation that Mushaffi enjoyed as a poet and an Ustad. He made Urdu poetry conform to the canons more rigidly and removed the fault in prosody technically known as *Shutar Gurba*, a fault common in verses of Mir and Sauda. Nasikh later carried on the reforms of Mushaffi.

Mushaffi's verses are of unequal merit. Some of them are highly artistic and show the pathos of Mir, the grandeur of Sauda, the colouring of Fighan, the simplicity of Soz, the fluency of Juraat, the diction and style of Insha. Many of his lines are of great worth and show the various characteristics of great masters. But the bulk of his ghazals have no distinctive merit of their own. Many of them are written in stiff metres with difficult rhymes and *radifs*, in imitation of Sauda and though they show his mastery and skill over them, the verses still lack Sauda's vigour and artistic excellence. He also wrote in the simple and eloquent style of Mir Taqi and Mir Soz but he is deficient in the genuine pathos that characterizes their works. He has no special style of his own and he cannot maintain the high level of some of his lines. His qasidas are strictly in conformity with the canons having high flown ideas and grandeur of words but lack strength and power. Mushaffi also wrote masnavis. One of his masnavis entitled *Bahrul Muhabbat* or "Ocean of Love" is based on and is avowedly an imitation of the *Darya-i-Isq* of Mir Taqi. The plot of the story, the style, the versification and the diction are the same as in the original.

There is nothing eminently striking in the works of Mushaffi. He was content to imitate the great masters who had preceded him. He was a fluent writer and a facile poet. He had a great command over various kinds of compositions and his verses show traces of local colour in a greater degree than those of Juraat but in a lesser degree than those of Insha. There is no sublimity of thought, no sustained flight of imagination, no subtlety of emotion. His prolixity forbade him to take pains with his technique and many of his verses are loose and defective. The language he employed was also archaic and many obsolete words and constructions which he used had been discarded by his compeers. His language is that of Mir and Sauda although he lived in the age of Insha and Juraat.

The Satires of Insha and Mushaffi.

The quarrels of Insha and Mushaffi are notorious and numerous lampoons, burlesques, satires, oftentimes licentious and full of malice commemorate the various events. The satires are sometimes scurrilous language versified. The humour is mordant and the wit caustic. Mushaffi was at first the poetical master of Prince Suleiman Shikoh but was later on supplanted by Insha which grievously mortified Mushaffi, who took it as a personal affront. A reduction in his pay, a burlesque of his poems, and the parade of self-laudatory verses by Insha opened the flood-gates of malice, sarcasm and filthy abuse on both sides. The fire was fanned by the pupils of both adversaries and the quarrels enlisted the support of not only poets but the general public of Lucknow who enjoyed the fun and loved the excitement. The quarrel raged furiously and long and often pens were

exchanged for sticks and swords. Processions were organised to ridicule the opponents and lampoons were sung publicly. Insha naturally had the upper hand owing to his gifts of honour and wit and the support of Prince Suleiman Shikoh and the Nawab. The patrons took keen interest in these quarrels and enjoyed the processions and counter-processions and applauded the lampoons recited to ridicule each other. The literary value of these satires and lampoons is little but they provide interesting reading.

Mushaffi despite his deficiencies is one of the great masters of Urdu verse and as an influence, as a facile writer of ghazals, as a great Ustad, and as a writer of a useful tazkira of Urdu poets ranks very high in Urdu literature

Rangin 1169-1250 A. H. (1755-1834 A. D.) or 1171-1251 A. H. (1757-1835 A. D)

Saadat Yar Khan, poetically surnamed Rangin, son of Tahmasp Beg Khan Turani, was a celebrated poet of Delhi. His father came to India with Nadir Shah and settled at Delhi where he obtained the rank of Haft-Hazari and the title of Muhkimuddaulah.

Rangin entered the service of Mirza Suleiman Shikoh who was staying at Lucknow. Rangin was a noted horseman and was thoroughly skilled in the art of warfare. Rangin commanded for some time a part of the Nizam of Hyderabad's artillery but subsequently he gave up his appointment and became a merchant and a dealer in horses. He was a great friend of Insha and used to visit him frequently at Lucknow. When but a youth of fourteen or fifteen, he began to write poetry under the tutorship of Shah Hatim. He wanted to become a pupil of Mir but he was rebuffed and severely snubbed by him. After Hatim's death his poems were corrected by Mohammad Aman Nisar, a pupil of Hatim. It is said by Blumhardt that he also submitted his verses to Mushaffi for correction.

Rangin travelled widely. He was a great rover, and a gallant. His *amours* were the talk of the day. Being wealthy, handsome and given to pleasure he spent his life in the society of dancing girls and courtesans. He was very sociable, polite and sweet-tempered. According to Sprenger, Karimuddin and a chronogram by Nassakh Rangin died in 1251 A. H. (1835 A. D.) at the age of eighty. Sheifta in his Gulshan-i-Bekhar states, Garcin de Tassy following, that he died in 1250 A. H. at the age of eighty-one.

He has left the following works :—

His work.

I. *Masnavi-i-Dilpazir*, a masnavi of about 2,000 verses containing the romances of Prince Mahjabin, the King of Bulgaria and the Rani of Srinagar. It was composed in 1213 A. H. (1798 A. D.) as is known by the chronograms appended to it by various writers notably Juraat, Insha, Mushaffi and Qateel.

II. *Eejad-i-Rangin*, a masnavi containing fables and amusing anecdotes some of which are indecent in character.

III. Some more masnavis and a few qasidas. The masnavis contain short tales and witticisms.

IV. The four diwans collectively entitledu *Nau Ratan* (nine jewels). Separately named they are diwani rekhta, diwani bekhta, diwani amekhta or diwani hazal, diwani anghekhta or diwani rekhti.

V. A masnavi entitled *Mazherul-ajaib* also called *Gharaib-al-mashhur*, containing a collection of anecdotes.

VI. *Majalis-i-rangin*, a critical review of the period and their authors. Many of the criticisms are adverse.

VII. *Fars nama*, a treatise on horses and veterinary art composed in 1210 A. H. (1795 A. D.).

The first diwan was composed about 1228 A. H. as there is a chronogram for that date. It contains seventy-two pages of ghazals, twenty-two pages of quatrains, two poetical epistles and a qasida of six hundred couplets. The second nuskha, as the diwans are called, contains ninety-four pages of ghazals and some quatrains. The third diwan contains humoristic poetry chiefly ghazals. It contains a laudatory qasida in praise of Satan. The fourth is exclusively devoted to the ghazals in the language of Zenana. The poet has supplied a preface in which he explains the idioms and slang terms peculiar to the harem and to the women of loose character whom he styles *Urs Sheitan*.

Rekhti, its meaning and growth.

Their style is particularly pleasant but they contain several indecent allusions. Nassakh considers Rangin to be the originator of rekhti poetry, a distinction which this poet also claims for himself in his preface to the second edition. Traces of this form of composition are found in earlier poets notably Moulana Hashmi of Bijapur who is one of the well-known poets of early Deccan School and Syed Moulana Kadri, a contemporary of Wali, whose poetical surname was Khaki, and who had compiled his diwan in 1182 A. H. (1768 A. D.). These people were, however, influenced by Bhasha where the woman generally addresses as opposed to Urdu where the man speaks out his love. There is nothing of debasement in their poems. On the contrary the rekhti of Insha and Rangin was based on licentiousness, frivolity and sensuality. Their purpose is to raise a laughter or excite desire. There is no sublimity, no purity, no healthy amusement.

The reasons for the origin of Rekhti in Urdu.

It might be regarded curious that the language of the zenana should be different from that of the men. The difference is only of idioms and words. Certain idioms and words are peculiar to the ladies

of the zenana which are not ordinarily used by men. This difference is in a great measure due to the institution of the *purdah* which separates the men from the women and allows no free intercourse between them. In orthodox families restrictions are imposed on men in their own homes as they are not allowed by custom to visit or see certain of their woman relations. It was natural that certain idioms would spring up which would find currency amongst the ladies alone. Men with their wider connections, greater education and higher culture, acquire and adopt foreign words with readiness. Women with their lesser culture, and with fewer opportunities and facilities for education stick to the old stock of words and guard the 'purity' of the language. Women being more conservative and less pron to change did not favour exotics and uncouth, indigestible and learned words which were adopted only when they had been made presentable by modifications and changes. Further, women by nature are more superstitious and bashful and they coined words to convey delicately the sense of those words which they could not name without fear or without an outrage on their own sense of modesty. The difference in the idioms and words was inevitable especially in the homes of orthodox Mohammadans where the *purdah* is obtained in all its rigour. This difference was exploited by Rangin and Insha for their own nefarious purposes. Immorality, sensuality and indecent fun are writ large on these diwans of rekhti.

Rekhti poetry mirrors the debased society of Lucknow when licentiousness and profligacy reigned supreme in the court of nobles and mistresses were regarded as badges of fashions and honour. The society of dancing girls and courtesans wa no reproach. The gallants of the town and the young sparks indulged in such pleasures without fear of incurring any odium and poetry was harnessed to minister to their low pleasures and debased delights. Such low and indecent poems could only lead to vice and corrupt the morals of young men. Insha realized the evil effects of such indecent poems on respectable men and women as he states in one place in his *Darya-i-Latafat*. This sort of composition, purient and highly spiced attained great popularity and was immensely applauded. It reached its culmination in the works of Mir Yar Ali Khan poetically surnamed Jan Sahab, son of Mir Amman and a pupil of Nawab Askar Ali Khan. He was originally a resident of Lucknow but spent the later part of his life at Rampur. He used to dress himself as woman and used to recite his poems in rekhti in the poetical assemblies after the manner and style of women much to the laughter of the poets and the audience. In 1847 A. D. he went to Delhi and then to Bhopal, in search of livelihood but being unsuccessful in finding any suitable employment he came back to Rampur where he died

Jan Sahab died 1897 A. D.

about 1897 A. D. being more than seventy years of age. This form of composition is now tabooed in polite society and poems in lighter and humoristic vein are only allowed if they do not offend the sense of propriety and decency.

The poet kings of Delhi. Shah Alam II (1761-1806 A. D.)

The later kings of Delhi were not only patrons of poets but were creditable poets themselves. Shah Alam II (1761-1806 A. D.) wrote under the pseudonym of Aftab and is the author of a romance entitled *Mazmun-i-Aqdas*, "the most sacred composition", a masnavi containing the story of Muzaffar Shah, king of China. The title is a chronogram for 1201 A. H. (1786 A. D.), the date of the completion of the work. He has also left a diwan of ghazals extending to 244 pages. He also wrote in Persian and his dirge lamenting the loss of his eyesight and the cruelties practised by the atrocious Ghulam Qadir is very pathetic and heartrending. Sauda, Mir, Naseer, Azam, Zaar, Mamnun, Ahsan, Taslim, Insha, Firaq, and numerous other poets received his patronage at one time or another.

Mirza Suleiman Shikoh.

His son Mirza Suleiman Shikoh, brother of Akbar Shah II, the king of Delhi, who had at first repaired to Lucknow but returned to Delhi in 1815 A. D. and died in 1838 A. D. has left a Diwan of Urdu poems and was patron of the poets who were refugees from Delhi, notably Insha, Mushaffi and Juraat. He consulted Shah Hatim while he was in Delhi and at Lucknow he showed his verses to Muhabbat, Mushaffi and Insha.

Akbar Shah II Shua 1806-1837 A. D.

Akbar Shah II who succeeded his father reigned from 1806-1837 A. D. He occasionally wrote poetry and used Shua (Ray) as his takhullus in allusion to that of his father, Aftab (Sun).

Bahadur Shah II Zafar.

His son Bahadur Shah II, the last titular king of Delhi, wrote copiously under the title of Zafar. His full name is Mirza Abul Muzaffar Sirajuddin Muhammad Bahadur Shah and he was born in 1775 A. D. succeeded to the throne in 1837 A. D. was deposed in 1858 A. D. and died in exile in Burmah in 1862 A. D., Bahadur Shah was passionately devoted to poetry and he spent his long life in wooing the muses with the passionate ardour of a lover. Having nothing serious to do, with no cares of administration, Zafar sought distraction by writing poems and consulted Zouq and Ghalib. Before he became a king he showed his poems to Naseer.

Not only was he a great poet but he was well versed in Indian music and composed many songs such as *Thumries* which gained immense popularity in Northern India. He was also an able calligraphist and with his own hand wrote passages from the Koran for the principal mosques of Delhi.

Zafar also wrote a commentary on Saadi's Gulistan entitled *Sharah-i-Gulistan* which is well spoken of. His fame however chiefly rests on his voluminous diwan of ghazals which is extremely popular and widely read. His ghazals are sung in music halls and in the streets by dancing girls and fakirs. It is asserted by the biographers of Zouq and Ghalib that they frequently wrote for their master Zafar and most of the ghazals of Zafar are the productions of his poetical tutors. There is some truth in the assertion. With all that Zafar was a real poet and could compose with fluency, ease and skill when he so wished. His long practice also stood in great stead. Many of his ghazals have a distinction of their own and bear no resemblance to the works of Ghalib and Zouq.

Zafar wrote in an easy style. His verses are eloquent, flowing and sweet. They have genuine pathos and charming simplicity. Zafar's misfortunes added a note of real feeling. To show his mastery over versification, Zafar occasionally tried stiff metres and difficult rhymes and his efforts are often creditable. His thoughts are noble, his fancy high soaring, his similes apt and his emotions refined and sublime. Sometimes he tends to conventionality and artificiality. He was a great patron of poets. Naseer, Zouq, Ghalib, and others partook of his bounty.

Zafar is really a poet of high class and ranks very high for his charming ghazals, sweet songs, and generous patronage of poets.

Minor poets.

Amongst the minor poets of the age who are eclipsed by the towering personalities of their contemporaries may be mentioned the name of Qaim, Qasim, Hasrat, Minnat, Mamnun.

Qaim Chandpuri.

Sheikh Mohammad Qaim Uddin poetically surnamed Qaim was the pupil of Sauda and a poet of a very high order and specially distinguished himself in writing quatrains and qitas. He was a native of Chandpur district Bijnore and he died in 1210 A. H. (1795 A. D.) He was employed at Delhi as a Darogha of the royal armoury. At first he submitted his poems for correction to Mir Dard. Qaim is the author of a much esteemed tazkira. He died in 1208 A. H. (1793 A. D.). He is said to have composed one and half lac of couplets. He is the author of ten masnavis, over hundred qasidas and numerous ghazals and rubaiyats. He is the author of a book in prose entitled *Shakkarastan*, in imitation of Sadi's Gulistan. He resided at Tanda when he left Delhi and afterwards went to Rampur.

Mamnun.

Syed Nizamuddin, son of Syed Qamaruddin Minnat who originally belonged to Sonipat, was born and brought up at Delhi. He was awarded the title of Fakhr-us-shaura or the 'pride of the poets' by the emperor. He spent some time at Ajmer as a sadar-us-sudur but came back to

Delhi. He died about 1844 A. D. By reason of his high poetical powers he attained the distinction of a master and left many pupils. His Diwan shows his mastery over every form of composition. His reputation was very high amongst the poets of his age.

Hasrat Dehlvi.

Mirza Jafar Ali Hasrat was the son of Mirza Abul Khair. He was born at Delhi and was an apothecary by profession. He was a born poet and attained considerable proficiency in the art of writing verse. In 1173 A.H. when Shah Alam ascended the throne Hasrat enrolled himself as a court poet and joined the group of other poets of Delhi who surrounded the Emperor. He was an eye-witness to the cruelties of Ghulam Kadir when he blinded Shah Alam, plundered the royal treasuries and palaces, dishonoured the ladies of the harem and looted the city. He composed a marsia in which he narrates all these misdeeds.

Hasrat left Delhi for Faizabad which was then the capital of Oudh, the seat of Nawab Shujauddaolah. It sheltered the refugees from Delhi. Hasrat wrote a poem which describes the worries and troubles of the journey, the intense heat, the slow conveyance, the dust of the way, the scarcity of water and food. On his arrival he read a qasida in honour of the Nawab and was given a small pension. In 1188 A. H. when Asafuddaulah became the Nawab Hasrat composed a laudatory poem and recited it before him. In 1195 A.H. when Asafuddaulah moved to Lucknow and made it the metropolis of Oudh, Hasrat also moved at the earnest desire of his friend Nawab Mohammad Khan and resided at Ghanta Beg ki Gadhia.

When Prince Mirza Suleiman Shikoh came to Lucknow, Juraat, Hasrat's favourite pupil accompanied him and came to reside near his Ustad, Juraat and Hasrat began to take part in the poetical assemblies of Lucknow and exacted applause by the bounty and skill of their verses. He was first of all a companion of Mirza Ahsan Ali Khan Bahadur and then of Prince Jehandar Shah. Hasrat used to ride a palanquin and affect to be a nobleman. The refugees from Delhi became envious and jealous of one another. They sought to compass the downfall of one another and wrote satires, parodies and burlesques. Hasrat was also made a butt and Sauda wrote a scathing satire. Hasrat satirises a physician of Lucknow when he attacked his professional reputation and skill. Hasrat was also the recipient of a stipend from Prince Suleiman Shikoh.

Rai Sarab Singh Purwana was the poetical master of Hasrat. He has left a diwan of qasidas, two diwans of ghazals, another of mukhammas, musuddas, and tarjiband and another of rubai.

Hasrat had many pupils, chief amongst whom was Juraat. It is not known when he died and the date 1217 A. H. is not a probable one.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LUCKNOW SCHOOL OF URDU POETS

THE AGE OF NASIKH AND ATISH.

Centre of poetry shifts to Lucknow.

The centre of interest now shifts to Lucknow. The fortunes of the kings of Delhi were at their lowest ebb. They were only figure-heads, titular kings without kingdom, receiving the bounty of the 'Company Bahadur.' The first shock to the remnant of the old Moghul Empire was delivered by Nadir Shah and the dissolution that had set in at that time was hastened by subsequent onsets. The massacre and devastation of Delhi by Nadir Shah was followed by the invasions of Ahmad Shah Abdali and the raids of the Mahrattas. There was no security of life and property. Shah Alam II fell an easy victim to the dastardly atrocities of Ghulam Qadir who ruthlessly blinded him. In his impotence Shah Alam bewailed the loss of his eye-sight and his own internment and piteously appealed to the Sindhia and the English in a most pathetic ode. The nobles carried on their petty rivalries and parochial quarrels. With the disappearance of the glory, power and wealth of the kings of Delhi there began a general exodus of poets who had hitherto thriven on the bounties of the poet-sovereigns. Mir, Sauda, Hasan, Insha, Mushaffi and others went to seek their fortune at the opulent court of Lucknow. The Nawabs were rich and generous and imitated the kings of Delhi by not only writing poetry but posing as patrons of poets. The impoverishment of Delhi was the gain of Lucknow. Poets from Delhi were welcomed with open arms. Jagirs, titles, honour, wealth, pensions and rewards were showered in profusion. Munificent patronage was even extended to minor poets. The crotchets and idiosyncrasies of poets were not only condoned but applauded. Their verses were lauded to the skies. The Nawabs and nobles strengthened the ties by taking up poets as their companions. This intimate linking up of poetry with the court of the dissolute Nawabs sowed the seeds of decay. It assuredly gave an increased impetus to the development of poetry but it also lowered its dignity when the poets surrendered their self-respect and conformed themselves to the likes and dislikes of their masters. Mir and Sauda though receiving pensions were thoroughly independent and allowed no interference from the Nawabs in the sphere of poetry. Insha and Mushaffi succumbed to the seductions of court influence which proved their ruin. It smothered inspiration and made poetry conventional and laboured.

The Lucknow School of poetry.

The poets from Delhi kindled the light at Lucknow and created a widespread taste for poetry. Before their arrival there were no poets of note. The

establishment of the capital at Lucknow by the opulent Nawabs of Oudh and the exodus of poets from Delhi contributed immensely to the growth of poetry at Lucknow. The Nawabs were eager to surround themselves with eminent poets. Invitations were sent to Sauda which he courteously refused. The arrival of poets from Delhi was hailed with great delight. Poetical assemblies sprung up in the city. Nobles and people went crazy over them. They were in raptures over their verses. Such meetings were convened in various places, monthly, fortnightly, weekly and even daily. Poets were spurred to put forth their best efforts. Contests amongst them led on to better compositions. Frequent meetings resulted in the increase of the volume of their output. The competition made the poets shine with greater brilliance. Applause was the breath of their nostrils. This widespread taste for poetry gave rise to a new school, indigenous in its growth. There is no essential difference between the nature of the two schools. The models selected by them were however different. They also differed in the treatment of the subject. It was the spirit of adventure, of invention, that impelled the poets of Lucknow to break away from the traditions and established usages of Delhi poets and to chalk out a new path for themselves. The greatest exponent of this school, Nasikh, and his distinguished pupils reigned supreme for some time till the style palled on the taste of the public and with the advent of a new order of things a reaction set in.

The Lucknow School of poetry compared and contrasted with the Delhi School of poetry.

It was characteristic of Delhi School to picture emotion in simple and fluent verses. Imagery and words were subordinated to feeling and thought. Nasikh and his followers, on the other hand, devoted themselves exclusively to words and figures of speech. It was word painting in its worst sense. Thought was sacrificed to diction. Only these words which were related to each other and which could match with the subject-matter of the couplet were to be used. If the theme of the verse was a garden only those words were to be employed which had any connection with or bearing on garden. Others however suitable were rigorously excluded. This overmastering attention to words smothered spontaneity and brought in artificiality. Words were ransacked and woven into the couplet without a reference to its aptness, resonance, and general effect. A relation to the theme was the only criterion for selection. Another result of this evil was that poetry became highly conventional. Freedom, pathos, genuine sentiment, eloquence and simplicity were all sacrificed at the altar of words.

There was a marked tendency to indulge in extravagant hyperbole which was deemed a sufficient substitute for lofty thoughts and high flights of imagination. There is no subtle analysis

of feeling, no fine dissection of emotion, no delicate delineation of the inner workings of soul. All that is found is verbiage, coloured, sometimes picturesque and rarely sublime. The works of Saib and Bedil were their models from whom they sought inspiration. Like Saib they introduced the simile in the second hemistich to prove poetically their assertion in the first. The similes were occasionally fresh, clever and attractive but oftentimes hackneyed and listless. Like Bedil they indulged in high flown metaphors and extravagances of thought. His subtleties were also imitated and the poets very often lost themselves in them. These unrestrained flights are not the flights of Sauda and Ghalib. The lofty soarings of Lucknow poets appeal to the brain and not to the heart. They are clever but mechanical. Their verses are constructed as those of Pope and his school. They bear the impress of conventionality and artificiality. They lack feeling and their reading leaves one cold. The heart is not warmed. They do not vibrate with emotion and have no haunting quality. Often the pains bestowed in the couplet is not commensurate with the result achieved. The verses bear the imprint of dexterous workmanship, a vast knowledge of the works of Persian poets and a thorough command of the language. They were charming as a novel experiment but the novelty soon exhausted itself and they were reduced to ridicule in the hands of inferior craftsmen. The glut of such emotionless and tame verses soon turned the taste of people to the delightful and spirited compositions of 'Anis and Dabir and the charming odes of Ghalib, Zauq and Zafar. The poetry of Lucknow reflects the civilization and life of the era of which it sprung. The ghazals of the age of Nasikh and his pupils mirror the effeminacy of the times. A complete catalogue of ornaments, wearing apparel and toilette articles of ladies could easily be compiled from the verses of that period. Occasionally the poets adopted a womanish way of speech and used language generally employed by ladies. The poets of Delhi scrupulously avoided this. They dexterously wove sweet Persian constructions in their verses and cleverly introduced Persian idioms and pithy sayings. They wrote short ghazals and thus avoided trite sentiments. On the contrary the poets in Lucknow went to the extent of writing four or five ghazals of inordinate length in the same metre, radif and qafia. This was a culmination of practice inaugurated by Mushaffi and Juraat. This prolixity is responsible for the artificial and vapid nature of the poetry of that period and occasionally debased character of some of the verses of that school.

Age of discrimination of words.

This age and the next following saw much effort in this direction. It began with Nasikh and was carried on by his pupils in Lucknow and in Rampur. They were called 'Zaban dan' or

knowers of the language. Rashk, Bahr, Sahar, Munir, Taslim, Jalal, Barq, Wajid Ali Shah Akhtar, Qalaq, Asir and other leading lights of those ages prided themselves in making searching enquiries about words used for poetry. They carefully chose their idioms and words and correctly used them in verses. They were acknowledged authorities on the right use of Hindi words and idioms. A rigorous selection ousted many words and shortened the poetical vocabulary. It also hardened it for words and idioms were required to be used only in the manner and sense employed by these masters. Any heterodoxy in this respect was condemned. The sense of words and idioms was fixed.

The school of Lucknow poetry gave rise to some differences in the language. Poets and people of Lucknow used a few words and idioms in a peculiar manner and contended that the words and idioms which they used were an improvement over those current in Delhi and popular with the Delhi poets. According to the Lucknow school their words and idioms were more elegant and more eloquent. The difference also extended itself to grammar. Certain words were regarded as of masculine gender by people of Lucknow which were considered as feminine by people of Delhi and *vice versa*. These differences which are not broad and numerous were first formulated by one Rashk, a pupil of Nasikh, and they have been perpetuated by controversies carried on by their respective champions even to this day.

Sheikh Imam Baksh Nasikh died 1524 A. H. (1838 A. D.)

Sheikh Imam Baksh poetically surnamed Nasikh (abrogator) was one of the greatest poets of Lucknow and the founder of the Lucknow school of poetry. His parentage is not definitely known. It is said that he was adopted by Khuda Bux, a tent-maker and a wealthy merchant of Lahore who was sonless. His adoptive father gave Nasikh a good education and brought him up as his own son. After the death of Khuda Bux his brothers disputed the inheritance challenging the adoption and calling Nasikh a slave of their father. A patched up reconciliation resulted in an attempt to poison Nasikh which was happily frustrated. The matter ultimately went to court and was decided in favour of Nasikh. A few quatrains in his diwan commemorate the incident. He read Persian with Hafiz Waris Ali and other learned scholars of Farangi Mahal, a quarter of Lucknow noted for its erudition and boasting of a noted academy of Persian and Arabic learning. He also acquired proficiency in Arabic and went through the usual curriculum of those days. It is not known with certainty whose pupil he was in poetry. It is said that he once approached Mir who refused to take him up as a pupil. It can be said with greater assurance on the authority of Mushaffi that Nasikh consulted Tanha a pupil of Mushaffi, but the connection does not seem to have lasted long. He depended upon his own resources and

sedulously and constantly furnished and polished his own compositions and corrected them in the light of experience he gained at the various poetical assemblies which he regularly attended. In course of time he acquired sufficient mastery over verse and came to be recognised as a great Ustad. He himself corrected the ghazals of others and gathered round him a considerable number of pupils some of whom were very distinguished and poets of no mean order.

Nasikh was very fond of physical exercise, had a splendid physique and an enormous appetite. He never married but was wedded to his art. His ordinary daily food weighed over five seers. He took only one meal in a day. He was dark of colour and his rivals and opponents had nicknamed him a 'tail-less buffalo', His daily programme was to get up in the early hours of the morning, finish his daily physical exercise, take his bath and receive his pupils and friends. At twelve he took his meal, and retired for a siesta. In the afternoon he again saw his friends and pupils and discussed poetry with them. At night he retired to rest when he composed his own poems and corrected those of his pupils. He was a great stickler of etiquette and exacted its strictest observance from the nobles and commoners alike who came to visit him. He had a magnetic personality, for despite his punctiliousness he drew large crowds of pupils and friends amongst whom were some of the high dignitaries and nobles of Lucknow. He had an abundance of independence and possessed a choleric temper. He never cared to seek any service and lived in comfort on the munificence of his admirers. In 1831 A. D. he was presented with a lac and quarter of Rupees by his patron Agha Mir.

Nasikh had to leave Lucknow during the reign of Nawab Ghaziuddin Haidar who wanted to attach him to his court and to confer on him the title of 'poet-laureate'. Nasikh was cut to the quick, declined the offer, and remarked that the title bestowed by a mere Nawab who had neither the prestige and dignity of the Emperor of Delhi, nor the power of the 'Company Bahadur' was worse than useless. This contemptuous reply aroused the ire of the Nawab and Nasikh had to seek shelter in exile. He went to Allahabad and resided there for some time. He received here an offer with a present of twelve thousand rupees from Raja Chandu Lal of the Deccan who promised munificent patronage and high honour. Such was his love for his native place that Nasikh refused the offer and also a subsequent offer which was accompanied by fifteen thousand rupees. After the death of Ghaziuddin Haidar Nasikh returned to Lucknow but had to leave again owing to the hostility of one Hakim Mahdi, an agent of the Nawab of Oudh, who was a rival and opponent of his patron and friend Nawab Agha Mir. In his itinerary he visited Fyzabad, Allahabad,

Benares, Cawnpore, and Patna but his love for Lucknow always drew him back. After the death of Hakim Mahdi he again repaired to Lucknow in 1248 A. H. (1832 A. D.). He died in 1254 A. H. (1838 A. D.).

His work.

He has left three diwans but only two of them have attained celebrity. He compiled the first in Allahabad in his exile in 1232 A. H. (1816 A. D.) and called it *Daftar-i-Pareshan* (Disordered Pile). This contains ghazals, quatrains and chronograms. His second and third were compiled in 1247 A. H. (1831 A. D., and 1254 A. H.) (1838 A. D.) respectively. The value of the chronograms contained in his Diwan is great for they give dates of the deaths of many Urdu poets and notable persons. Nasikh did not write qasidas and his panegyrics took the form of qitas. He never indulged in lampoons and satires. He is also the author of a masnavi entitled *Nazm-i-Siraj* 'the light of poetical composition,' the title being a chronogram for the date (1254 A. H.) when the book was arranged for publication by his pupil Rashk after the author's death. It treats of the wisdom of God as manifested in the creation and is founded chiefly on traditions. It does not however add to the reputation of Nasikh as a poet and is of no special merit. Nasikh has also written a poem describing the birth of Mohammad but the poem is not entitled to any particular distinction.

Nasikh's claims for distinction.

Nasikh's fame rests on his ghazals, the new school of poetry that he inaugurated and the host of brilliant and talented pupils that he left behind. He was a powerful influence in the age in which he lived. He had a great command over the language Urdu and Persian and had supreme mastery over verse technique. His influence was considerable in Lucknow in the domain of poetry and his verses are often quoted as authority in cases of dispute over a particular idiom or construction or a peculiar use of a certain word. He showed commendable taste in the employment of his words and was careful to discard archaic words and obsolete idioms which had survived the age of Sauda and Mir. Mushaffi harked back to the past and clung to the old words and constructions. But in his love for experiments and in his originality Nasikh often erred on the side of extravagance and unfortunately introduced unfamiliar and poly-syllabled words which are not at all suitable for ghazals. These indigestible words imported from the inexhaustible store of Persian had to be abandoned for they marred the beauty and eloquence of the verses. Such words, on the whole, are infrequent in Nasikh. His verses are faultless in construction like Pope's. There is a similar lack of warmth and feeling about them.

Influence on the language.

His ghazals.

His ghazals are marked by coloured and high-flown phraseology, and quaint conceits but they are wanting in real emotion and depth of feeling. Artificiality is writ large on them. Very often the similes are fantastic. The imagery is not an adjunct but an end in itself. This over-ornamentation clouds the sense and mars spontaneity. His ghazals, in short, combine the similes of Saib and the grandiose, fancy and subtleties of Bedil.

His chronograms.

He had a genius for writing chronograms and some of them are extremely neat and well finished. They are invaluable to history as they supply numerous important dates.

He did not write Qasida, was no mystic, had no humour and was often intolerant in his religious beliefs.

He did not write qasidas though he would have succeeded in this line. Qasidas do not call for any real feeling or a subtle analysis of emotion. The fantastic conceits and the high flown and coloured imageries would have been better woven in panegyrics. But his distaste was due to his independence of character which disdained flattery. He is not a mystic and has no message to deliver. Some of his so-called spiritualistic verses bear the imprint of his characteristic style. His verses lack humour, for Nasikh possessed none. His laugh is sardonic and his wit, which is very rare, is caustic. Occasionally he would indulge in religious attacks in his verses and his hits on those not of his persuasion are in bad taste and not in keeping with the dignity of his vocation as a poet.

The defects of his ghazals.

His defects are the defects of the school he founded. There is no glowing splendour of sentiment. He never transports the reader. There is no poignant suggestion, no far-reaching vista in his poetry. There is no throb or response in the heart of the reader even in his highest and happiest flights. His verses are frigid and conventional. The unduly laboured vocabulary, the stilted poetic diction, the ransacking of the domains of art and nature and the rich treasures of Persian poetry for similes, the use of indigestible words too heavy for delicate odes, the prodigality and pomp of imageries often stale and tawdry and used for their own sake, the feeble conceits and trivial thoughts clothed in gorgeous vocabulary, the general air of conventionality and artificiality are some of the outstanding defects. Nasikh is also accused of direct plagiarism from Persian verses by a mere change of verbs. He is not however the first to do so for Sauda and Mir are frequently found to commit such depredations on the rich stores of Persian.

Changes wrought by Nasikh.

Nasikh claimed by his title that he had abrogated the old order of things and had ushered in a new era. It must be stated that the changes which he

wrought were in the air. Nasikh embodied them in his verses and gave them prominence in his works. He also lent to them the weight of his authority. Nasikh started on his career as a poet and a poetical reformer under the auspices of Qamaruddin Ahmad alias Mirza Haji who was a very wealthy and influential man with considerable prestige. He had literary inclinations and collected learned men in his miniature court chief of whom were Mirza Qateel and Qazi Mohammad Sadiq Khan Akhtar, a pupil of Qateel who attained celebrity at the time of Wajid Ali Shah. Literary discussions, discourses and philogogical researches were carried on and greatly helped Nasikh and influenced him considerably. Some of the changes wrought may be noticed. The word Urdu came to be in vogue in Lucknow instead of the old word rekhta which continued to be used much longer in Delhi. Nasikh also gave wider currency to the word ghazal in place of its synonym rekhta. He brought into fashion certain metres which had their ending in such words as *ka*, *ko*, *hi*, *say*, *nay*, *par*, *tak*, *hai*, *nahin*, etc. He forbade heterodoxy in the use of verbs and refused to recognise modifications in them which had been introduced by the older poets of Delhi. This came to be one of the points of difference between Delhi and Lucknow School. He weeded out scurrilous, indecent and obscene words which even disfigure the writings of Mir and Sauda. He limited the scope of poetic diction by showing predilection for Arabic and Persian words, and excluding Hindi words, sometimes quite unnecessarily. It was at his time that the gender of words was finally determined and fixed. Persian constructions were more largely used. The sphere of Urdu ghazal was widened by the introduction of themes other than erotic—philosophical and didactic. The use of various words was fixed. A long list of changes in words registered at the time of Nasikh is given in tazkirah Jalwa-i-Khizr and reproduced in Shairul-Hind. Nasikh not only promulgated his fiat regarding the changes but he rigorously and sedulously conformed to them himself in his own writings and made his pupils strictly adhere to them. His pupil Rashk was the custodian of these changes.

His position in literature.

Nasikh, however, is a master of his craft. His verses are a triumph of conventionality and artifice. His extraordinary influence entitles him to a very high place in Urdu literature. He was the arbiter for half of Lucknow for a considerable period of time. He gave the law in poetical matters, which was implicitly obeyed by his innumerable pupils. Posterity refuses to go into ecstasies over his verses.

His pupils.

He left behind him many distinguished pupils, chief amongst whom are: Wazir, Barq, Rashk, Bahr, Sahr, Munir, Nadir, Abad and Tahir.

Fatah-ud-daulah Bakhshi-ul-Mulk Mirza Mohammad Razi Khan, poetically surnamed Barq, son of Mirza Kazim Ali, was an intimate companion and a poetical master of Wajid Ali Shah Akhtar, the last king of Oudh. Barq was deeply attached to the King and accompanied him to Calcutta after his dethronement where he died in 1857 A. D. He was a soldier skilled in the use of arms and commanded a great influence in Lucknow both by his position and birth, and by his generosity and beneficence. He follows his master Nasikh in the use of similes. His verses share the taint of artificiality and conventionality which characterizes the whole school. He has however a mastery over the language and verse technique. He was a prolific writer and attempted every species of composition. His verses on his exile from Lucknow, although conventional, are full of fire and sentiment. He left distinguished pupils in Jalal and Sahr.

Barq d. 1857 A. D.

The poetical surname of Sheikh Imdad Ali was Bahr, the son of Sheikh Imam Bakhsh, to be distinguished from his poetical master Sheikh Imam Bakhsh Nasikh. He was not in affluent circumstances but in the latter part of his life he was patronized by Nawab Kalb Ali Khan, Nawab of Rampur, where he died in 1300 A. H. (1882 A. D.) at the age of 75. His Diwan was compiled by his friend, Nawab Syed Mohammad Khan Rind, pupil of Atish. His verses are full of similes and metaphors but there is not much of labour or bombast. They are easy and flowing and unlike Nasikh or his other followers have pathos and spontaneity. He devoted much thought and care on the use of words and prosody and was an adept in these subjects. After Nasikh and Rashk he came to be regarded as an authority on discrimination of words and he was prized at Rampur for his proficiency in this subject and his poetical powers.

Bahr. 1225-1300 A.H. (1810-1882 A. D.)

Mirza Mahdi Hasan Khan, poetically entitled Abad, son of Mirza Ghulam Jafar Khan, was born in 1228 A. H. in Lucknow. He was one of the nobles of Lucknow and was related to the Nawabs of Farrukhabad. He was extremely devoted to poetry and held regularly poetical assemblies at his house and attended those held at other places. He was a very prolific writer and has left two diwans, a masnavi and three wasokhts. One of his diwans, entitled *Nigarastan Ishq* was printed in Lucknow in 1262 A. H. (1845 A.D.) He is however better known by his anthology *Baharistan-i-Sakhun* in which he cites ghazals of Nasikh and Atish and his own composed in the same rhyme and meter which affords admirable opportunities for comparison. His verses have no

Abad, born 1228 A. H. (1813 A. D.)

distinctive quality except that he is an apt pupil of Nasikh with occasional flashes of good poetry.

Wazir, d. 1854 A.D.

Khwaja Mohammad Wazir, son of Khwaja Mohammad Faqir, was poetically surnamed Wazir. He was descended from the celebrated saint Khwaja Bahauddin Naqshband from his father's side, and by his noble birth and saintly character commanded considerable influence in Lucknow. He led a retired life and was a great student of cryptic science and had a reputation of possessing occult powers. He had sturdy independence and excused himself twice from the invitations of Wajid Ali Shah, the Nawab of Oudh. He died in 1270 A. H. (1854 A. D.). After his death his pupils and friends collected his scattered ghazals into a Diwan entitled *Daftar-i-Fasahat* which is a chronogram for 1263 Fasli (1271 A. H. 1854 A. D.) the year of its compilation and printing. He left a host of pupils, chief amongst whom was Fakir Mohammad Goya who has left a Diwan. Wazir is the best exponent of the school of Nasikh and was his greatest and most beloved pupil. He has attempted compositions in several stiff measures with difficult rhymes and has acquitted himself creditably according to the canons of his own school. None of his compeers come up to him. He is one of the foremost poets of this period.

Rashk. 1214-84 A. H. (1799-1867 A. D.)

Mir Ali Ausat, son of Mir Suleman, was a native of Fyzabad who came to Lucknow and attained celebrity as a poet under the *nom de plume* of Rashk. He was one of the numerous pupils of Nasikh and is chiefly remembered by his exhaustive and authoritative lexicon of Urdu entitled *Nafas-ul-Lughat* (the Soul of lexicons) a chronogrammatic title for the year of its compilation 1256 A. H. (1840 A. D.) It is written in Persian and deals with Urdu and Hindi idioms and words. The lexicon attained celebrity and popularity in his lifetime and a portion of it has since been published. He left two diwans entitled *Nazmi Mubarik* (1253 A. H. 1837 A. D.) and *Nazmi Grami* (1261 A. H. 1845 A. D.). He follows the path marked out by Nasikh and was a copious writer. His works are not free from sensualism, descriptions of the toilettes of women, and other blemishes of the school. He was an adept and most prolific in composing chronograms and has left a host of pupils chief amongst whom is Munir who used to consult Nasikh when he was alive but betook himself to Rashk after his death. In the latter part of his life he went to reside in Karbala (Arabia) where he died in 1284 A. H. at the age of 70. Rashk resided in Cawnpore and Allahabad also. He paid particular attention to the correct use of words and he was a great authority on this subject even at the time of Nasikh. His verses are quoted to illustrate the use of words and the various shades of their meanings.

Mirza Hatim Ali Beg, poetically surnamed Mahr (Sun), was born in 1230 A. H. and came of a distinguished Ispahan stock. His father Mirza Faiz Ali Beg Qazalbash was a Tahsildar at Aligarh under the East India Company. His grandfather Mirza Murad Ali Khan came to Lucknow in the time of Nawab Shujauddaulah and obtained the title of Rukunuddaulah. He held important posts and was once the administrator of Rai Bareli. His great grandfather came to India as commander of the arsenal. Mahr's father died when he was only four years of age. He turned to poetry at a very early age and used to compose verses at the age of fourteen. He enrolled himself as a pupil of Nasikh while his brother Mirza Inayat Ali Beg poetically named Mah (Moon) bent his knee before Atish. By constant practice Mahr soon achieved distinction and developed a firmness of touch. In 1840 A. D. after having passed the necessary examination, he was appointed a Munsiff at Chunar. He also qualified as a High Court Vakil. In 1857 A. D. he rendered meritorious service and hid seven Englishmen and in return got a robe of honour and a Jagir of two villages. He transferred his residence to Agra and began to practise in its Courts. For some time he also did honorary magisterial work. He died at Etah in 1879 A. D. where his son Sakhavat Ali was a Tahsildar.

Mahr.
1230-1296 A. H.
(1814-1879 A. D.)

Mirza Mahr was a Shiah but there was no taint of prejudice in him. Amongst his friends were Ghalib, Moulvi Ghulam Imam Shahid, Saba, Munir, Dabir and Anis. Ghalib has written many letters to him which have been published in Urdu-i-Mualla. Maharaj Balwan Singh of Benares who was staying at Agra became his pupil and allowed a monthly stipend of fifty rupees.

Much of his work in poetry was lost at the time of Mutiny. The following is the list of his published and unpublished works.

1. *Almas-i-Darkhshan* is the name of his Urdu diwan. Its chronogrammatic name is Khayalat Mahr published by his grandson, Mirza Qasim Hussain Qazalbash.

2. *Parai Uruz*, a small treatise on prosody.

3. *Ayagh-i-Faringistan*, a book on history, dealing with the early British period published in 1873 A. D.

4. *Dagh Nigar*, a masnavi composed in one day.

5. *Dagh Dil Mahar*, a wasokht.

6. Shua-i-Mahar Masnavi, published in 1858 A. D. and highly praised by Ghalib in his letters. Other works are Shabih-i-Ishrat, Zab Intiqam, Hamdam Akhrat, Biyan Bakhshaish, Id Qaisariya, Panja Mahr, Tauqir-i-Sharaf and various other poems. He was a prolific and many-sided writer, and an adept in neat chronogrammatic verses. He deserves a prominent place amongst

second rate poets. His poems are marked by firmness of grasp, sense of harmony, flow, and occasional sweetness of a high order. There are some very elegant verses which are natural and eloquent.

Munir. 1235 A H.-1298 A. H. (1819 A. H-1881 A. D.)

Syed Ismail Hussain, with the *nom de plume* of Munir, was the son of Syed Ahmed Hasan, a poet having his takhallus Shad, was a resident of Shikohabad in the District of Mainpuri, United Provinces. He however stayed for a long time at Lucknow where he was brought up and educated. Some light is thrown on his life by the introduction written in Persian by Munir himself to his Urdu diwan entitled *Muntkhabat Alam.* He corresponded with Nasikh and got his verses corrected by him. At Cawnpore where he was a companion in the service of Nawab Nizamuddaulah he personally saw Nasikh and enrolled himself as his pupil in poetry. It was at his direction that he afterwards became a pupil of Rashk. To both these poets Munir refers feelingly with reverence and pays his meed of homage to their art. He made many journeys and stayed at Calcutta, Murshidabad, and Allahabad. Lucknow appealed to him with a peculiar and strong force and he longed to go and reside there permanently and take part in the poetical activities of the city. Numerous references to this intense yearning are found scattered in his works. He used to visit that city at least every year. At Lucknow he sought service with Zafaruddaulah Nawab Ali Asghar. After some time he was again called to Cawnpore. He did not stay long there as he was compelled to leave that city and he went again to Lucknow where he attached himself to Nawab Syed Mohammad Zaki Khan poetically surnamed Zaki, whose verses he corrected. He remained there for a period of two years. He was then called to Farrukhabad by Nawab Tajammul Hussain Khan where he stayed during the lifetime of the Nawab. After a time of hardship when he received invitations from the Rajas of Dholpur and Alwar he sought service with the Nawab of Banda and became the poetical preceptor of Nawab Ali Bahadur, Chief of that State. He was implicated after the Mutiny in a murder of a dancing girl named Nawab Jan and on conviction was sentenced to transportation. He was however released in 1860 A. D. After a few wanderings he found asylum at Rampur at the Court of Nawab Kalb Ali Khan where he died in 1881 A. D. He is the author of three diwans, which are entitled *Muntakhabat Alam*, *Tanweer-ul-Ashar*, and *Nazm-i-Munir*. The once famous masnavi *Maarajul Mazamin* owes its existence to his pen. It describes the miracles of the Imams. He was a prolific writer after the manner of the poets of those times. Munir also wrote marsias and submitted them for correction to Dabir. He eminently distinguished himself in the qasida which was his *forte.* He also wrote qitas, rubais, mukhammas,

ghazals in Urdu and Persian. He follows Nasikh and Rashk, and is their true disciple. Sometimes he soars into regions of emotions and imagination and is really eloquent. He writes with great force and his qitas are characterized by simplicity, elegance, and neatness. His ghazals bear the impress of the school of Nasikh. He occupies an important place in the hierarchy of the poets of the time.

Atish, died 1263 A. H. (1846 A. D.)

Khwaja Haider Ali poetically surnamed Atish (Fire) was the son of Khwaja Ali Bakhsh, and belonged to a respectable family of Delhi. His father came to Fyzabad from Delhi in the time of Nawab Shujauddaulah and settled there in Mohalla Mughelpura. Atish was born in Fyzabad. His father died when Atish was merely a boy and hence his education was neglected and he became a '*Banka*' and enrolled himself in the service of Nawab Muhammad Taqi who brought him to Lucknow. Atish saw the poetical combats of Insha and Mushaffi and became greatly interested in them. From his early youth Atish was poetically inclined and these contests kindled a love of poetry in him. He submitted his early efforts to Mushaffi for correction. He was not a learned man like Nasikh or Insha and had read only the routine books which people customarily read. He however studied the treatise on rhyme in Arabic but did not care to advance his studies further.

In his life, as in his writings Atish was a contrast to Nasikh. He led an unaffected life free from all conventionalities and formalities. He was a lover of beauty and of a roving nature. He dressed himself like a soldier and carried a sword with him even in poetical assemblies. He never cared for patronage or wealth and led a life of resignation and contentment. Often his pupils came to his succour and he never lowered himself by making requests or writing panegyrics in praise of nobles or nawabs. He used to receive a salary of Rs. 80 from the kings of Oudh. His pupils and the disciples of his family which had its origin in some saint also contributed towards his subsistence by the presents made by them in an humble manner. He lived in an old tumble down house, in a poor style, like a fakir. He was haughty and unbending to nobles but meek, submissive and obliging to the poor. He had sturdy independence which refused to be restrained and which spurned the patronage and bounty of nobles and courtiers. He quarrelled with his ustad Mushaffi and began to correct and polish his own verses.

He was a contemporary of Nasikh. Lucknow was divided in its allegiance between Nasikh and Atish. These contests of skill spurred on these great masters to put forth their best efforts. In rivalries there were occasional hits and inuendos which were always veiled. There was no open rupture, no lampooning or parodying of verses, no bursts of abuse as in the case of Insha

and Mushaffi, Juraat and Nawa.) There is always an admirable sense of self-restraint. Atish despite his contempt for the style of Nasikh had a great respect for him for he gave up writing verses on the death of Nasikh as if there was nobody left who could appreciate his compositions.

Atish died in 1243 A. H. (1823 A. D.) leaving a host of pupils some of whom attained the rank of a master.

Atish writes like fire as his *nom de plume* signifies. There is no artificiality, no conventionality, no trite thoughts or quips clothed in bombastic words or gorgeous phraseology. The great bulk of his verses have a musical cadence and a pictorial effect. His compositions are the standard for Urdu idioms. Some of his verses are the best examples of Urdu poetry. His verses on the whole are easy, flowing and eloquent, full of fire and feeling. There is no labour, no profusion of ornament, no interlarding of imageries. They are polished words beautifully strung in verse. It is true that most of his verses lack the poignant suggestiveness, the haunting quality, the echoing detonation, the auroral light of the highest poetry. There are occasional finds which can compare with the best in any language. He ranks foremost amongst Urdu writers of ghazals after Mir and Ghalib.

The great merit of Atish is that he portrays the various emotions in elegant and attractive phraseology. There is nothing flamboyant about him. His language is crisp and colloquial without sinking into slang. His verses are easily understood and melodious. His idioms are choice and elegant. His diction is felicitous. His sentiments though not as sublime and refined as Ghalib's are admirable and usually free from sensuality which was too common in the courts of the effete and pleasure-seeking Nawabs of Oudh.

His works.

The first of his diwans was compiled during his lifetime. It attained immense popularity. His second which is short comprising his later odes was compiled after his death by his devoted pupil Khalil. He never wrote qasidas, or any other form of composition.

His faults.

His unkind critics find fault with some of his verses which they say reveal his want of knowledge and literary attainment. True poetry is not dependent on learning but it must be conceded that he sometimes used words incorrectly. In his defence it can be said with justice that he used words as he found them current in Urdu without regard to the etymological significance or original form. He was not a purist, and it was fortunate he was not, for the excessive hardening of Urdu is due to the not very commendable efforts of the learned to persianise it.

Nasikh and Atish compared.

Both Nasikh and Atish were masters of their style and founded different schools in Lucknow. The cult of Nasikh has suffered a great loss in its prestige. In the hey-dey of its youth it enjoyed considerable power and ranked high in people's estimation. Nawab Mustafa Khan Shaifta in his *Tazkira Gulshan-i-Bekhar* gives the palm to Nasikh and considers him superior to Atish. Ghalib, however, in one of his letters assigns a higher place to Atish and finds more poignancy in his verses than in those of Nasikh. In sheer poetic powers Atish must score. His diction is more refined and sweeter than that of Nasikh who has a predilection for indigestible words. Verses of Atish are more natural, have greater vivacity and spontaneity and move with greater vigour. His verses are replete with noble sentiments and reflect his character as a fakir and as a man of great independence and contentment. Such sentiments are not so often met with in the works of Nasikh. Atish employs spiritual themes much more frequently than Nasikh. Generally speaking Nasikh triumphs over Atish in the use of far-fetched metaphors, subtlety of thought and grandeur of words but is inferior to him in suggestiveness and poignancy. Atish is also a victim to the craze of the times in writing about the waving locks, the down on the cheek, the mole on the face, the toilette of women and such other themes. Both cared for the purity of the language. There can however be no two opinions that for sheer poetry Atish is superior to Nasikh.

His pupils.

His most famous pupils were Rind, Saba, Khalil, Dayashankar Nasim, Nawab Mirza Shauq and Agha Hajju Sharf.

Rind 1212-1274 A. H. (1797-1857 A. D.)

Nawab Syed Mohammad Khan poetically surnamed Rind (Rake) son of Nawab Sirajuddaulah Ghyas Mohammad Khan was born in 1212 A. H. (1797 A. D.) at Fyzabad. He was closely related to the ruling family of Oudh and was reared as befitted a noble of high rank. During his stay in Fyzabad he submitted his verses for correction to Mir Khalık son of Mir Hasan and adopted the title of Wafa. In 1240 A. H. (1824 A. D.) he repaired to Lucknow and enrolled himself as a pupil of Atish. He compiled his diwan in 1250 A. H. (1834 A. D.) and called it *Guldasta-i-'Ishq* ("Bouquet of Love"). A second diwan was compiled after his death. He was true to his name for he led a rake's life and spent his time in the gaiety and sensualism of the Oudh court. After the death of his master Atish he gave up wine and licentiousness and in the fervour of faith he started on a pilgrimage to Mecca but died in the way at Bombay just before the Indian Mutiny. His style is simple and elegant and is remarkable for the felicity of idiom and diction. The sentiments are not very high and the pictures painted are mostly of sensual passion. But the taste is

not debased and the verses do not generally offend the decorous ear. There are however glimpses of higher poetry where love is spiritualised and where he transcends earthly passions. There are stray pieces dealing with Sufism and morality. He is a creditable pupil of Atish.

Khalil.

Mir Dost Ali poetically surnamed Khalil, son of Syed Jamal Ali, was a native of Badauli in Oudh and a distinguished pupil of Atish. He was a companion of Nawab Nadir Mirza and visited Calcutta in his company in 1279 A. H. (1862 A. D.). His verses are unequal in merit. Occasionally he soars sublime but ordinarily his verses reveal his fondness for unfamiliar words, and figures of speech. He is essentially a love poet but his verses treat of sensual passion and occasionally are debased.

Naseem, 1811 A. D. to 1843 A. D.

Pandit Daya Shankar Kaul, son of Pandit Ganga Prasad Kaul, was one of the distinguished disciples of Atish and is the reputed author of the celebrated masnavi *Gulzar-i-Naseem* which along with the masnavi *Badre Munir* of Mir Hasan enjoys considerable popularity. Daya Shankar is generally known by his *nom de plume* Naseem. He came of a Kashmiri family and was born in 1227 A. H. (1811 A. D.) but died very young in 1260 A. H. (1843 A. D.) at the age of 32. He received the necessary education in Persian and other arts and entered service as a moonshi in the army of Amjad Ali Shah, Nawab of Oudh. From his childhood he was poetically inclined and studied the works of masters of Urdu and Persian poetry and enrolled himself as a pupil of Atish at the age of 20. He devoted himself to the masnavi and wrote *Gulzar-i-Naseem* in imitation of the famous and pupular masnavi *Sihar-ul-Bayan*. At first it was very prolix but at the suggestion of Atish he summarised it and it is now regarded as a model of conciseness. It was composed in 1254 A. H. (1833 A. D.) and published in 1260 A. H. (1844 A. D.) in the lifetime of the author and at once leapt into fame and popularity. It is characterized by its terseness, its flow, its flights of fancy, its profusion of apt similes, felicitous use of idioms and appropriate words. It was natural that it should be artificial and consequently it lacks warmth. It is a *tour de force* of skill and imagination and is a triumph of art. There can be no comparison with *Sihar-ul-Bayan* as the style of both is different. The masnavi enjoys wonderful popularity and many of its verses have passed off as familiar quotations and are used in most Urdu-speaking households. It has immortalized Daya Shankar's name, and fitly ranks as one of the best productions in Urdu literature.

Saba, 1210-1271 A. H. (1795-1854 A. D.)

Saba, the *nom de poete* of Mir Wazir Ali, was the son of Mir Banda Ali of Lucknow but was adopted by his uncle Mir Ashraf Ali who supervised his education. Saba was very genial and inordinately fond of society. His friends were always crowding round him and as most of them were addicted to opium a seer of opium would be consumed to entertain them all till late at night. He had generous impulses and helped his poor friends unostentatiously. He received two hundred rupees per mensem from the Court of Wajid Ali Shah and thirty rupees from Nawab Muhsan-ul-mulk. He was a distinguished pupil of Atish and left some notable pupils of his own. He was a contemporary of Naseem Delhvi. He died in 1271 A. H. by a fall from a horse. He left a voluminous erotic diwan called *Guncha-i-Arzu* and a masnavi relating to the shikar of Wajid Ali Shah. His style is characterized by the artificiality, dryness and bombast of Lucknow School, and by the sensuality of his compeer Rind occasionally relieved by the flow, eloquence, passion, effect and spontaneity of Atish, his master in poetry.

Agha Hajju Sharf.

Agha Hajju Sharf abstained from the use of those Persian words which grated on the ears of orthodox Muslims. He tabooed words such as 'idol, temple, church, Brahmin, couchshell, sacred thread, *zahid*, *waaiz* (preacher of worldly wisdom), *saqi*, cup, wine boy, wine, etc.' These words were used by poets in a double sense in the manner of Sufis and Sufi poets pre-eminently Hafiz. They were however misunderstood by the worldly-minded people. Sharf however was over-zealous and his avoidance was only confined to himself. These words are the principal stock-in-trade of Urdu poets.

Minor achievements of the pupils of Nasikh and Atish.

Tazkirah Jalwa-i-Khizr gives a list of some of the minor changes affected by the pupils of Nasikh and Atish in Urdu poetry. It is reproduced in *Shairul Hind*. The changes are:—There was comparatively less use of indigestible Persian and Arabic words and unwieldy Persian constructions; many of the Hindi words which had been evicted were readmitted into the fold; idioms were only used when they fitted in and enhanced the effect and beauty of the verse; moles and down on cheek, bulbul and gul, cypress and qumri were sung less frequently; there was no lavish use of metaphors, hyperbole, and resemblance in words.

CHAPTER IX.

THE COURT OF LUCKNOW AND ITS URDU POETS. THE AGE OF WAJID ALI SHAH AKHTAR.

The Nawabs of Oudh and their patronage.

Delhi had been the nursery of Urdu poetry. With the decline of Delhi there began a general exodus of poets at one time or other and Arzu, Soz, Sauda, Mir, Insha, Juraat, Mushaffi and others sought an asylum at the opulent and munificent court of the Nawabs of Oudh whose ambition was to rival the Kings of Delhi in grandeur, pomp, munificence and patronage. They imitated the kings not only in surrounding themselves with poets of note but in writing verses.

Asafuddaulah, Asaf. (1775-1797 A. D.)

Nawab Asafuddaulah was a great patron of art and literature and noted for his munificence. His beneficence was proverbial and is even remembered to this day. He shifted the capital from Fyzabad to Lucknow and built many noble edifices there. He had a passion for buildings. He loved poetry and wrote verses under the *nom de poete* of Asaf. These verses were shown by him to Mir Soz who corrected them and consequently Soz came to be known as the poetical master of the Nawab. Asaf's verses are characterized by simplicity and passion and are free from that blemish of artificiality which latterly marked the school inaugurated by Nasikh. Asaf has left an Urdu diwan containing about 300 pages of ghazals, 170 pages of rubaiyat and mukhammasat and a masnavi extending to about 100 pages. It was in his time that Mir and Sauda arrived in Lucknow and were handsomely pensioned off by the Nawab. Demoralization had not set in in the court and Sauda and Mir maintained their high position as poets which was readily recognised by Asaf.

Saadat Ali Khan, (1798-1814 A. D.)

Nawab Asafuddaulah was followed by his brother Nawab Saadat Ali Khan who was raised to the Masnad of Oudh at Lucknow by Sir John Shore after the death of his brother, Nawab Asafuddaulah and the dethronement of that Nawab's adopted son Wazir Ali Khan. In his time the English obtained further concessions by the treaty concluded with him and Saadat Yar Khan feeling secure in view of his friendship with the English plunged into pleasures and gaieties in which he was egged on by his scapegrace companions and courtiers. Insha who had shot into eminence by his ready wit, abundant humour and remarkable power of repartee bade adieu to real poetry for which his scholarship and genius had given a rich promise. He served as a court buffoon and he was encouraged in it by seeing his buffoonery applauded and well rewarded. The offensive lampoons, the biting tirades, the filthy abuse garbed in poetry, the

indecent burlesques, the scurrilous invectives, which were exchanged between Insha and Mushaffi were heard with delight. Saadat Ali Khan wrote little poetry but he is not said to have left any diwan. He is remembered as a generous patron of poets.

Ghazi uddin Haidar (1814-1827 A. D.)

Ghazi-uddin Haidar succeeded his father Saadat Ali Khan and assumed regal dignity five years after his accession, with the concurrence of the British Government. His coronation took place with great *eclat* at Lucknow in 1819 A. D. in the time of Lord Hastings. He scattered pearls and rupees in profusion on this occasion. Ghazi-uddin Haidar was a poet of ordinary capabilities and has left rekhta poems most of them being in praise of the Imams and 'so bad as to bear internal evidence that they are genuine productions of a king'. (Sprenger).

Nasiruddin Haidar. 1827-1837 A. D.

He was followed by his son Nasiruddin Haidar (1827-1837 A. D.) who also composed qasidas in praise of the Imams under the poetical surname of Ali or Ali Haidar. He also wrote under the pseudonym of Padshah and some of his Urdu love lyrics enjoy celebrity.

Wajid Ali Shah (1847-1856 A. D.)

Nasiruddin was followed by Mohammad Ali Shah (1837-1842 A. D.) and Amjad Ali Shah (1842-1847 A. D.) who were patrons of art and literature and gave encouragement to poets by bestowing rewards and pensions. They were followed by Wajid Ali Shah who has rendered his name a byeword and a reproach by his sensuality, prodigality and extravagance. His misrule made the local chiefs independent and more than one Nazim made himself the virtual master of the district he was appointed to govern. Life and property were hardly safe and revenue could only be realized at the point of the bayonet.

Wajid Ali Shah ascended the throne at the age of twenty in the prime of his youth. His companions led him on the 'primrose path of dalliance' which ultimately proved his ruin. He spent about two crores of rupees to build the Qaisarbagh (the Royal Garden) which was to be the scene of bacchanalian revels and orgies. He kept thousands of girls who ministered to his sensual appetite and who figured in dances specially organised for him. Money was spent like water and the royal voluptuary pursued his insensate course until he was deposed and transported to Calcutta. In Matia Burj in Calcutta he revived on a smaller scale the glories of Lucknow and people who had seen the pomp and splendour there speak of it as a Lucknow in miniature. The journey from Lucknow to Calcutta is described by Wajid Ali Shah in a

masnavi called *Huzn-i-Akhtar*, 'the sorrows of Akhtar'. He died in exile in Calcutta in 1887 A. D.

Wajid Ali Shah was a man of many tastes. He had an artistic temperament. He was a great lover of birds and animals and his zoo in Lucknow and Calcutta was a sight for travellers even from distant Europe. He was a great lover of music and had considerable proficiency in this art. He was a prolific writer of verses and a liberal patron of Urdu poets who revolved round the sun of his glory like satellites. In fact the passion for poetry and music was responsible to a certain extent for the decay and ruin of his kingdom. He also loved architecture and adorned Lucknow with many buildings. Urdu poetry in his Court busied itself in describing the toilets of women and the physical beauty of courtesans. This coarse and sensual poetry was a direct incentive to his debaucheries, and when sung by beautiful girls in alluring toilets amidst his lascivious courtiers it had a most deleterious effect on the easy morals of the King. In his circle he was known as Jan Alam Pia (the beloved Jan Alam) and the most acceptable presents to him were those of beautiful girls.

Wajid Ali Shah adopted Akhtar (Star) as his *nom de poete*. He has left many works. He tried every species of composition, wrote qasida, ghazals, masnavi, salaam, qita, rubai and marsia. He is the author of :—

I. Six diwans of ghazals entitled :

(1) Shua-i-Faiz or the Rays of Beneficence.

(2) Qamr-i-Mazmun or the Moon of the Subject.

(3) Sakhun-i-Ashraf or the Noble Composition.

(4) Guldasta-i-Ashqana or the Amorous Nosegay.

(5) Akhtar-i-Mulk or the Star of the Country.

(6) Nazm-i-Namwar or the Poem of Repute.

II. Many masnavis chief amongst which are (1) *Huzn-i-Akhtar* describing the journey to and troubles in Calcutta; (2) *Khitabat-i-Mahallat* or titles of the ladies of his harem. It gives a list of ladies who were regularly married and of others who were married according to mutaa form. It also shows which of his wives had male or female issues and which of them had been divorced. The masnavi was written during his stay in Fort William at Calcutta in the time of Indian Mutiny; (3) Bani, (4) Naju; (5) Dulhan; (6) Dar Fan-i-Mausiqi or treatise on the art of music; (7) Darya-i-Taashuq or Ocean of Love.

III. Marsias which are contained in three volumes entitled (1) Jild Marsai or a volume of marsias which comprise 25 marsias or elegies running to 2,111 stanzas. (2) Daftar-i-Ghum-o-Bahr-i-Alam containing 22 marsias. (3) Sarma-i-Iman containing 33 marsias.

IV. Qasidas in Urdu and Persian. Qasaid-ul-Mubarik.

V. Mubahsa Bain-ul-Nafs-o-ul-Aqal or a Debate between Sensuality and Reason.

VI. Sahifa-i-Sultani contains prayers culled from the Quran.

VII. Nasahai-Akhtari or Exhcrtations of Akhtar.

VIII. Ishq Nama or the Book of Love.

IX. Risālai Iman or Treatise on faith on the woes of the people of Qaaba.

X. Dafter-i-Pareshan.

XI. Maqtal-i-Muatbar.

XII. Dastur-i-Wajidi.

XIII. Sut-ul-Mubarik.

XIV. Haibat-i-Haidiri.

XV. Johur-i-Uruz on prosody.

XVI. Irshad-i-Khaqani, a treatise on prosody and rhyme.

He is the author of over forty works. He is also the reputed author of *thumris* or songs set to music which are deservedly very popular. Some of his compositions are in the rustic dialect of Oudh and are philologically of much interest.

He showed his verses for correction to Muzaffer Ali Aseer and Fatah-ud-daulah Barq, the reputed pupil of Nasikh. They were also his companions. Barq had a great deal of influence in the administration and was thoroughly devoted to his master and accompanied him to Calcutta where he died in voluntary exile in 1274 A. H. (1857 A. D.). Aseer however refused to follow the fallen fortunes of his master and remained in Lucknow much to the disgust and chagrin of Wajid Ali Shah.

Besides Aseer and Barq, Wajid Ali Shah had Amanat Qalaq, Bahar, Tasleem, Sahar, Zaki, Darakhshan, Qabul, Shafaq, Bekhood, Hunar, Uttarad, Hilal, Sarur and many others as his court bards.

His sons were also poets and their poetic appellations are Kaukab and Birjis.

Akhtar, though a fertile writer, was not highly gifted. His verses have no lofty sentiments and they do not vibrate with genuine emotion. The cult of the Lucknow school possessed·

him and he wrote a *la mode.* His masnavi *Huzn-i-Akhtar* is extremely interesting and touching and of high poetical merit. The verses ring true. The sorrow is genuine and not stimulated. The verses are simply flowing and very often eloquent. The diction is elegant.

He is also an author of a collection of letters written by him during his exile at Calcutta to his favourite wife Zinat Begum who was left behind at Lucknow and who is frequently called Iklail Mahal (Crown of the Palace) or Mumtaz Jehan (the Honoured of the World). They were compiled with the approval of Wajid Ali Shah with an introduction in an extravagantly ornate style of language by Akbar Ali Khan Tauqir, one of the secretaries of the king. He collected these letters to afford consolation to the king in his exile and to help to mitigate the sorrows of separation from his favourite wife. The letters are arranged chronologically and the work was completed in 1276 A. H. or 1889 A. D. The letters, several of which contain poetical effusions, are written in terms of affectionate regard for his absent wife with frequent allusions to his unhappy state of mind and longings for a return to his capital and throne.

Barq has been dealt with in the foregoing chapter.

Aseer, 1215-1297 A. H. (1800-1881 A. D.)

Aseer, the poetical surname of Saiyed Muzaffar Ali Khan, a native of Amethi and son of Syed Madad Ali, was the pupil in poetry of Mushaffi and a student of the celebrated scholars of Faranghi Mahal of Lucknow. He entered service in the reign of Nasiruddin Haidar and attained distinction in the reign of Nawab Amjad Ali. He spent 8 or 9 years in the companionship of Wajid Ali who sometimes consulted him in poetical efforts. He bestowed on him the titles of Tadbiruddaulah, Mudawarul-Mulk, Bahadur Jung. Aseer did not accompany his deposed master on his journey to Calcutta. It rankled in the heart of Wajid Ali Shah. He was a most prolific writer and compiled six diwans, four of which have been published. He also compiled one Persian diwan, one masnavi entitled *Durrat-ul-Taj* and a treatise on prosody of which he was an acknowledged master. He also wrote panegyrics and elegies copiously. He was a perfect master of technique and had a wonderful command over the language but he was also a victim to the Lucknow school of poetry although he occasionally freed himself successfully and effectively from its influence. He is better known as the poetical master of Ameer, the best of his pupils. His other pupils are his two sons Hakim and Afzal; Shauq and Wasti, who are masters of diwans. After the Mutiny he attached himself to the court of Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan Nazim, Ruler of Rampur, where he died in 1299 A. H. (1881 A.D.) at the age of 84.

Amanat, 1231-1275 A. H. (1815-1858 A. D.)

Amanat the poetical appellation of Syed Agha Hasan, son of Ali Agha Rizvi, was a descendant of Syed Ali Rizvi. At first he took to writing marsia and submitted his compositions for correction to Mian Dilgir a celebrated elegy writer of Lucknow. After some time he began to write ghazals and corrected them himself as Dilgir refused to touch amatory verses. In 1251 A. H. (1835 A. D.) he became dumb and remained so till 1260 A. H. (1844 A. D.) during which time he undertook a journey to Karbala where his tongue was loosened. He was extremely devoted to enigmas and riddles. He has left a diwan entitled *Diwan Khazainul Fasahat* (Treasure House of Eloquence), a collection of verses called *Guldastai Amanat* (Amanat's Nosegay), *Indar Sabha* (the Court of Indar) and many elegies on the death of Hasan and Hussain. The school of Lucknow reaches its culmination in him and he is regarded as the apostle of artificiality and conventional poetry which is dissociated from fact and sentiment. Common sense may almost be excused if it is indignant and disgusted at these frigid ardours, these fustian imitations of brocade. It is an imitation of Nasikh with all its worst faults in prominence. He is however best known for his two works, a Wasokht full of simulated passion and Indar Sabha a play describing the love of terrestrials and celestials—the progenitor of Urdu drama. He left two sons Latafat and Fasahat who commanded considerable influence in poetical circles in Lucknow.

Qalaq.

Qalaq, the *takhallus* of Khwaja Arshad Ali Khan known as Khwaja Asadullah, entitled Aftabuddaulah, was a pupil of his uncle Wazir the premier pupil of Nasikh. He however states that he was a pupil of Wajid Ali Shah which is sheer flattery and has no foundation in fact. He suffers from the defects of the Lucknow school of poetry and the love depicted in it is pure sensualism and licentiousness. He is however remarkable for the correctness of his verse and authority on language and occasionally bursts out into true poetry but such occasions are rare. His ghazal on Qaisarbagh is very popular and his masnavi *Tilasm Ulfat* (the Talisman of Love) is interesting and estimable. His qasidas in praise of Wajid Ali Shah are fairly good and mukhammas on the exile of Wajid Ali Shah is pathetic and passionate but it must be remarked that he deplores the deposition not from patriotic motives but for the extinction of the pleasures and revels which had been reigning supreme in the court and of which he had been a keen partaker.

Taslim.

Taslim, although a satellite of the court of Oudh, spent a greater portion of his life at Rampur. He would be dealt with appropriately in a subsequent chapter.

Zaki, died 1281 A. H. (1864 A. D.)

Mahdi Ali Khan poetically called Zaki, son of Sheikh Karamat Ali, belonged to Lucknow but resided at Moradabad. He went to Lucknow in the time of Ghaziuddin Haidar and enrolled himself as a pupil of Nasikh and read a panegyric in praise of the Nawab who rewarded him generously. He went to Delhi and then to the Deccan where he was amply appreciated. He again came to Lucknow and entered the court of the King Wajid Ali Shah who recognized his talents by bestowing on him the title of the King of Poets. He settled at Moradabad after the annexation but went to Rampur on the invitation of the Nawab. He went to Ambala after the death of Yusuf Ali Khan Nazim of Rampur where he died in 1281 A. H. (1864 A. D.) He was proficient in prosody and has left a treatise on the subject which was published in 1265 A. H. (1848 A. D.). He was a learned, intelligent and witty poet and occupies a prominent place in the ranks of second-rate poets of Lucknow.

Darakhshan.

Darakhshan, the *takhallus* of Syed Ali Khan entitled Mahtab-ud-daulah, Kaukab-ul-mulk, Sitarai Jang, was the pupil of Aseer and was presented to the court along with Qalaq and accompanied the King to Calcutta where he died. He knew astronomy and was a poet of mediocre abilities of the Lucknow school of poetry.

Akhtar died 1858 A. D.

Qazi Mohammad Sadiq Khan, poetically surnamed Akhtar, was the son of Qazi Mohammad Lal and was born at Hooghly in Bengal. He went to Lucknow in 1814 A. D. Ghaziuddin Haidar conferred on him the title of *Malik-ush-shaura*, Prince of Poets. Akhtar enrolled himself as a pupil of Qateel and participated in the *mushairas* of Mushaffi, Insha and Juraat. He stayed for a short time at Farrukhabad. It is said that Wajid Ali Shah asked Akhtar to allow him to use his *takhallus* and rewarded him munificently for it. After a time Wajid Ali Shah became displeased and Akhtar left Lucknow and became a Tahsildar at Etawah where he died in 1858 A. D. Akhtar was a very learned man and a great poet. He wrote copiously mostly in Persian. His Persian works are: *Mohammad Haidari*; *Guldasta-i-Muhabbat* an account of the meeting of Lord Hastings and Gaziuddin Haidar; *Sarapa-soz*, a masnavi; *Subh Sadiq*, his autobiography; *Aftab Alamtab*, a tazkirah of Persian poets; Persian Diwan; *Bahar Bekhizan*; *Bahar Iqbal*; *Haft Akhtar*, and an Urdu Diwan.

CHAPTER X.

ELEGY AND ELEGY WRITERS.

Marsia defined.

The marsia is an elegy of the dead and has been a favourite composition with Mohammadan writers. It is opposed to the qasida which is a panegyric of the living. The marsia is however confined to the elegiac poems on the death of Hasan and Hussain and other Mohammadan martyrs at Karbala which are chanted during the procession of the taziah at the annual celebration of the Moharram festival. Originally it was a dirge or threnody in which the writer bewailed the loss of the departed by recalling the sad and lamentable death of the deceased and his good qualities. It was short, usually comprising 15 or 20 verses, and it dealt strictly with the grief and agony born of such a bereavement. It was a genuine expression of sorrow. With the lapse of time its sphere was enlarged and the elegy was raised in status by the introduction of exordia containing panegyrics or satires, pictures of war, banquets, landscapes, challenges of warriors and their counter-challenges, praises of swords, horses, and accoutrements and various other incidents. By the importation of themes, the marsia came to be recognised as an important and dignified class of composition and occupies a very high and prominent place in Urdu literature.

Its antiquity.

Arabic poetry began with the elegy. When poetry was practised as a means of self-aggrandisement and advancement elegy decayed for it was not profitable or paying as it praised only the dead who had no longer power to reward. Elegy declined as the qasida rose in favour. Persian poetry, as it grew in love with affectation, laudation and artificiality did not encourage such themes as inspire the marsia. The lament of Sohrab's mother over him written by Firdausi can only be called a marsia by courtesy. Furrukhi wrote a marsia on the death of Mahmud of Ghazni but it is only of 11 lines. After this the marsia decayed. The elegies of Saadi and Khusru are commendable productions but they were not very popular and did not induce others to compose in similar style. Mahatsham Kashi wrote peerless marsias but did not bring about any change in the style. Talib Amli, Ghazali Maili, Kalim, Salim, and poets of that age did not generally attempt the marsia although they successfully wrote verses in all other styles. Zahuri's marsias are no more but praises of his patron Adil Shah. Maqbal, however, turned to it with a zeal, which brought about a change in the attitude of the poets of Persia who were led to favour this species of composition.

Marsia in Urdu poetry.

Urdu poetry takes its start in the court of the kings of Golcunda and Bijapur and the earliest forms it attempted included the marsia. The kings

of Golcunda and Bijapur were not only patrons of poets but poets themselves and with a religious bent of mind they wrote marsias and poems in praise of saints. The marsia was however in a rudimentary state. Wali, although he did not write marsias, wrote invocatory poems which are allied to marsia at least in purpose. Amongst the early Delhi poets the marsia was always popular, and many people wrote in that form of composition as a matter of devotion. The solemnity of the marsia was however held as a sufficient excuse for its literary demerits and crudities. Mir Taqi's Nakat and Mir Hasan's biography of Urdu poets mention a host of such writers a few of them being, Mir Amani, Mir Asmi, Mir Ala Ali, Mir Hasan, Darakhshan, Sikandar, Sabr, Qadir, Guman and Nadim. Mir and Sauda also wrote elegies but in a conventional style, with no real fire and emotion. The attempts of Mir Zahak and Mir Hasan are not remarkable but only interesting in view of the brilliant triumph of Anis. Before Sauda, marsias were written in stanzas of four lines but Sauda was the first to use the musaddus (a poem in strophes of six lines) which is now the standard form. Zamir attended to the subject-matter as Sauda had attended to its form. It was Mir Zamir who introduced fresh similes and metaphors, descriptions, picturesque and graphic scenes from nature, vivid narration of incidents of battle, pleasing exaggerations and other attractive features which were brought to perfection by subsequent writers, Anis and Dabir. It was probably Mir Zamir who recited the marsia in *Tahtul-lafz* a manner much in vogue in the time of Anis and Dabir as marsias were formerly chanted in *soz*.

Mir Zamir.

It has been mentioned before that Mir Amani, the great-grandfather of Mir Hasan and Mir Hasan were marsia writers but their marsias are not extant. Mir Hasan had four sons, three of whom Khulq, Khaliq and Mohsin were poets, and one of whom Khaliq attained celebrity independent of his father's reputation. Khulq was the pupil of his father and was an author of a diwan. He wrote marsias in accordance with the family traditions, and died at the mature age of 100.

The services of the house of Mir Anis to marsia.

Khaliq was younger to Khulq and was educated at Fyzabad and Lucknow. He began to compose verses early at the age of 16 and became a pupil of Mushaffi in accordance with the wishes of his father. He soon became very famous and Atish who had been called to a poetical assembly convened by Mirza Taqi at Fyzabad paid him the very high compliment of tearing his unread ghazal into pieces thus implying that it was inferior in merit to that of Khaliq. After some time his father died and he was reduced to penury. To support his large family he used to sell his ghazals. But he was

Khaliq, 1704-1804 A. D.

a fertile poet and succeeded in compiling his own diwan which did not however see the light of the day. He spent his life in writing marsias and was a contemporary of Mir Zamir, Mirza Fasih and Dilgir. Dilgir, a pupil of Nasikh, did not recite marsias as he had a defect of speech but in his compositions he showed innovations. Mirza Fasih, a pupil of Nasikh and Dilgir, went on pilgrimage to Mecca and settled there. The field was thus left to Khaliq and Zamir who brought forth their best efforts to outshine each other. These rivalries and poetical contests resulted in improvements of the form and subject-matter of marsia. Before Khaliq and Zamir marsias were ordinarily in stanzas of 4 lines but now they were of 6 lines in the form of musaddas adopted first by Sauda and made fashionable by Khaliq. Salaams were written in the style of odes. Marsias could be recited in either manner, *Soz* or *Tahtul Lafz*. Elegy composed in the form of Mustzad was usually called Soz. Marsia was usually confined to 30 or 40 stanzas but Mir Zamir, the contemporary and rival of Khaliq, was the first to extend its length to 70 or 100 stanzas and introduced exordia, *sarapa* or descriptions from top to toe, picture of battlefields and fights, and tales culled from the history of martyrdom. Elegy, which was only an expression of grief in the conventional style written with a view to gain merit, acquired a recognised position amongst the forms of Urdu compositions. New life was infused by the amplification of themes and the dry bones of marsias were clothed with the flesh and blood of vivid descriptions from nature and battlefields. This new invention of Zamir dealt a *coup de grace* to the old style. The marsia was further improved by the skilful efforts of Anis and Dabir. Formerly the marsia was looked upon as a devotional exercise with no poetic merit but now it is regarded as an important class of composition which fascinates Mohammadans of all persuasions and even Hindus, despite its sectional and religious complexion.

Improvement of form.

Improvement in theme.

Mir Khaliq paid the greatest attention to the elegance of idiom and beauty of diction and cared more for the pathos than for the flights of imagination. His elegies are thus distinguished from those of his contemporaneous rival Zamir who by reason of his greater scholarship and love of sublimity soared high in the regions of fancy. Anis follows his father's footsteps but amplifies the theme by the introduction of episodes and exordia. In short his verses are more literary. Anis copied faithfully the manner of the recitation of his father who would not seek any adventitious aids or the help of dramatic gestures, to give force and flow to his compositions.

Mir Khaliq's family was regarded as a repository of the pure idioms of the Urdu language. Nasikh always admonished his pupils

to learn the language in its purity from him. This devotion to the elegance of idiom occasionally led to attacks on his want of scholarship.

Mir Babbar Ali Anis was born in 1217 A. H. or 1216 A. H. at Fyzabad in one of its quarters called Gulab-badi, where his father resided. He was brought up under the fostering care of his father and he came to Lucknow when his eldest son, Nafees, had already been born to him. Uns, his younger brother, accompanied him. Connections did not however cease with Fyzabad for his father and brothers continued to live there. It was only later that the family migrated to Lucknow and settled there permanently.

Anis, 1217-1291 A. H. (1802-1874 A. D.)

Anis was not a great scholar in any sense. He had enough learning which stood him in good stead in his poetic career. He learnt *Sadra* from Mufti Mohammad Abbas and read the preliminary course with Moulvi Haider Ali. He was fond of physical culture exercises and also learned the use of arms from Mir Kazim Ali and his son, Mir Amir Ali, who were regarded as the finest exponents of this art in Lucknow. He also knew horsemanship. The technical knowledge of arms was highly useful to him in his descriptions of battles where he could utilize it dexterously and with striking effect. He was a great lover of beauty not only in human beings but also in animals and in nature. Anis was very proud of the family to which he belonged. He had an overwhelming sense of self-respect and thought much of the prestige and status of his family. He paid a great regard to the proprieties and was very formal in his intercourse with men. He would never see people unless they had made a previous appointment with him. Even his intimates could not come to him unannounced. In his dealings with the nobles he behaved with the same regard to his dignity. The same treatment was extended to the kings. He would not go unless Wajid Ali Shah sent a special messenger to request him to recite in the assembly. He ranked his noble birth and high avocation as a poet and a marsia-writer above every thing else. He permitted no breach of etiquette or of rules which he had framed to regulate his intercourse with his friends, visitors and admirers. He held fast steadfastly to the rules that he laid down for himself and others, without once deviating from them. He had one fashion in which he clothed himself. His principles and his poetic powers earned for him respect and veneration from the greatest in the land. Nawab Tahawwar Jung of Hyderabad considered it an honour when he took the pair of shoes of Anis and placed them with his own hand in the palanquin in which Anis was sitting. Anis, apart from his independence, led a life of contentment and never hankered

after riches. He never made a request or wrote panegyrics in the hope of getting rewards. As a reciter of elegies he got handsome presents from the nobles of Lucknow.

The reason for the popularity of the marsia.

Elegy leapt into sudden popularity when the Nawabs of Oudh became Shias. The period of conventional mourning was extended from ten days to forty days. The nobles and wealthy men of Lucknow especially those of Shia persuasion patronised this kind of composition for its sanctity and devotion. The court of Lucknow would temporarily suspend its gaieties and revelries during the sacred month of Moharrum. Special meetings would be convened at various places where marsias were chanted and people wept copiously and mourned deeply the sad death of the martyrs, Hasan and Hussain. The Nawabs and nobles would forego their pleasures and abstain from every kind of enjoyment. Such mourning and sorrow for a month was deemed by them a sufficient expiation for the sins of the whole year. The Nawabs even composed marsias, soz, salaams and rubais all bewailing the death of the Prince of Martyrs. (Wajid Ali Shah called and heard Anis and Dabir and Ghaziuddin Haidar heard Dabir.)

The journeys of Anis to Patna and Hyderabad.

Anis did not leave Lucknow until after the annexation of Oudh. He did not like to move thinking that his art would not be truly appreciated outside Lucknow. Circumstances compelled him to visit outside places. In 1859 A. D. he went to Azimabad (Patna) and in 1860 A. D. he again went there. He also halted at Benares on his return, after the second journey. He visited Hyderabad in 1871 A. D. and stopped at Allahabad while coming back. At all these places he recited his marsias to thousands of people in spacious halls which were packed to overflowing. Whenever Anis used to recite in Lucknow in his later days, thousands of people would collect from the surrounding places to hear him.

Anis died of fever at Lucknow in 1291 A. H. (1874 A. D.) and lies buried in his own house.

Poetry of Anis.

Anis was a born poet and had received poetry in inheritance. No house could present such a long line of illustrious poets and it was natural and befitting that Anis prided himself on his distinguished ancestry. He lisped in numbers and wrote verses when he was at Fyzabad. At first he adopted the pseudonym of Hazin probably owing to the intimacy of Mir Zahk with Ali Hazin the famous Persian poet. When Anis came to Lucknow he changed it for Anis at the desire of old Nasikh to whom Khaliq had brought him to see. This *takhallus* is said to be a gift from Nasikh who predicted

a bright and a hopeful future for him. Anis began with writing ghazals but he was early initiated into the composition of marsias in which his father had distinguished himself. During his own lifetime, Khaliq saw his son famous and admired. With the retirement and death of Khaliq and Zamir, the field was left open to Dabir and Anis. Both took to marsias with enthusiasm and wrote copiously.

His works.

Anis has written many thousands of elegies, odes, quatrains and qitas. The whole of his work is not published but it is computed to contain over 250,000 distichs. His published poems extend to five volumes and the rest is preserved in his family. He has left a diwan containing amatory ghazals. He used to recite in a very pleasing and charming style which he perfected by constant practice before a mirror. Despite his fertility he was a very elegant and skilful writer. There is no unevenness which disfigures the works of other poets such as Mushaffi.

Mir Anis is one of the most remarkable figures in Urdu literature. As a poet he stands in the foremost rank and there are not wanting men and critics who regard him as the best of Urdu poets. He is variously termed the 'Indian Shakespeare' the 'God of Urdu literature' the 'Homer', 'the Virgil,' the 'Valmik' of Urdu poetry. This is the very 'ecstasy of criticism.'

His service to the language and to Urdu idiom.

Anis rendered a great service to Urdu language. He polished and refined the language and his compositions are remarkable for their sweetness, elegance and freshness of diction. He was always careful about the purity of his idioms and he plumed himself on this as a distinctive feature of his writings. His vocabulary was vast and he used words gracefully and aptly. He added many new ones to the stock of Urdu words and firmly fixed the use of the old. In the beginning he employed old obsolete words which he abandoned as he gained experience and practice. The Urdu of Anis is regarded as most authoritative both in Lucknow and Delhi. His family was regarded as the custodian of the pure Urdu idiom. He always said that he used the idiom in accordance with the practice of his family in a particular way different from that of the people of Lucknow. Mir Hasan and Mir Khaliq maintained their connections with the family of Bahu Begum, mother of Asafuddaulah, whose family was regarded as the repository of pure Urdu. There was a regular office at Fyzadad where idioms and proverbs which had been coined in the harems of Bahu Begum were registered and circulated broadcast. At the head of this office were Mir Hasan and Mir Khaliq who were naturally regarded as the masters of pure idioms. Nasikh also realized the position of the home

of Mir Khaliq for he used to advise his pupils to go and learn the language there.

His service to marsia and Urdu literature.

His position in Urdu literature is unique. He supplied the epic element to Urdu literature. Urdu could not be expected to possess an epic of the rank of Homer's Iliad, Virgil's Æneid, Vyas' Mahabharat, Valmik's Ramayan or Firdausi's Shahnama. The language being of recent birth knew not that age which sees the birth of epics. It is too early to judge of its achievements. However Anis contributed something towards this direction. He perfected the old themes and imported new ones for marsias. His long exordia are delightful and highly poetical. They contain descriptions of battle-fields and fights which rival those of Firdausi in the Shahnama and Nizami in the Sikandarnama. His landscape painting is also admirable and new to Urdu literature. His portrayal of human emotions is extraordinarily clever. He strikes a new note in Urdu poetry.

His landscape painting.

Anis was a master painter of scenes from nature in all its moods. These descriptions are never independent but always subordinated to the main theme. They are however self-contained and as such are vignettes of perfect beauty and can be detached from the body of the poems without any harm. The dawn of the morning, the close of the evening, the rising of the sun, the moon-lit night, the blowing of the zephyr are all painted realistically. The gradual disappearance of stars, the rising of the mist, the mantling of darkness, the blooming of flowers, the verdure of trees are befittingly and charmingly sung.

His portrayal of human emotion.

Anis is pre-eminent in the knowledge of human emotions and in his interpreting them in his verses. Feelings of joy and sorrow, anger, love, jealousy, envy, fear, are all portrayed in a masterly style. He is a master artist as he never forgets the position of the personages who figure in his narration of the tale. If a child speaks, Anis would use sentiments and language befitting a child. He never overlooks the difference and thus shows glimpses of dramatic powers. Anis also distinguishes himself in appreciating the subtleties underlying the various relations of woman to man in her various capacities as mother, sister, wife, aunt.

His descriptions of battle-fields, horses and swords.

The descriptions of battle-fields, fights, marches, countermarches, challenges, arms, accoutrements are very vivid and powerful. He has praised swords and horses in many places but every time he describes them with freshness and vigour.

The continuity of description is also remarkable. Anis may not have been an altogether trustworthy historian for he has woven certain incidents in his verses which never took place except in his own imagination, but their fanciful existence has been perpetuated by later writers who continue to celebrate them in their marsias. Mir Anis is not free from solecism. (Maulvi Abdul Ghaffor Khan Nassakh published a brochure in which he pointed out the prosodical errors and other mistakes of Mir Anis and Dabir) Their apologists retaliated and published pamphlets in which they justified their heroes on every point. The truth lies midway. It is true that the marsias of Anis and Dabir were not published in their original and correct form and that interpolators made emendations. Allowance must also be made for the archaic words sometimes employed but it must be conceded that the quality of all the marsias is not even and that some verses fall short of that standard of excellence for which the names of Anis and Dabir are so justly famous. No wonder that these poets who wrote lacs of verses are sometimes found nodding.

His style.

Mir Anis is singularly happy in his similes, metaphors and figures of speech. He does not indulge in senseless extravagances and stupid hyperbole which was the craze of the Lucknow school amongst which he lived and wrote and although he does not wholly escape the influence yet he uses the figures of speech so judiciously that they are subordinated to the main theme and help to heighten the beauty of the verse. His similes are beautiful, noble and easy to comprehend. He is particularly happy in using them with charming effect. Great things are never compared with small. The similes are never trite and commonplace. He never allows his metaphors and other figures of speech to dominate him. His style is simple or gorgeous as occasion demands, but it is always eloquent and graphic. (The flow of language is wonderful.) His verses are characterized by the force and flow of language, elegance of diction and purity of idiom. Eloquence, melody and vigour are admirably blended. His verses are chaste, sincere and polished, and easy to understand although the simplicity often hides subtleties just as a limpid river deceives the unwary about its depth by its clear waters. His style is not uneven. He was a facile and a skilful writer who could describe the same subject in various ways with a freshness, alluring and attractive.

His position.

Anis occupies a very high place amongst the best masters of Urdu Literature. He sounded a note of real and genuine poetry amidst the artificiality and conventionality of Lucknow school. (He heralds the new age ushered in by Hali and Azad.) He left Marsia a perfect weapon which could be wielded with considerable effect and Hali made a noble use of it. He is a special favourite of English know-

ing readers who find a welcome escape from the perfumed atmosphere of conventional love so plentiful in Urdu literature. They find glimpses of true and genuine poetry full of real fire and pathos. The reputation of Anis even in his lifetime stood very high in Lucknow and Delhi and is still unchallenged and unimperilled. His fame is continuously on the increase and will increase with the advancement of Urdu literature and he will come into his own when Urdu literature is properly appreciated.

Dabir 1218 1292 A. H. (1803-1875 A. D.)

Mirza Salamat Ali, poetically surnamed Dabir, was born at Delhi in 1218 A. H. (1803 A. D.) His father was one Mirza Ghulam Hussain. There is a good deal of discussion regarding the nobility of his ancestors and attempts have been made to show that he came of a noble stock and his ancestors were well connected and highly distinguished. It must however be stated that his family was respectable and commanded some influence in bygone days. His father forsook Delhi on its devastation for Lucknow where he married and settled. He repaired to Delhi again when quiet was restored. Dabir, however, came with his father to Lucknow when he was seven years of age and was educated thoroughly. He evinced keen enthusiasm for scholarship and the discussions he held with learned men sharpened his intelligence and wit. Poetry and especially the marsia exercised great fascination for him and he became a pupil of Zamir the great rival and contemporary of Khaliq. He however outstripped other pupils by the quickness of his intelligence and attained a proficiency which earned great praise from his teacher and other poets. He was ranked as a great marsia-writer and is mentioned by Sarur in his *Fisanai Ajaib* along with the memorable marsia-writers of that age. His fame advanced rapidly and he had the privilege and the honour to recite his compositions before Nawab Gaziuddin Haidar and Wajid Ali Shah. Many noblemen and ladies of the royal household became his pupils and he came to be regarded as an authority on the Urdu language. His reputation as a poet and his intimacy with his teacher excited the envy of some of the less favoured rivals who created bad blood between him and his teacher on the subject of a marsia which he recited in the assembly of Nawab Iftakharuddaulah. In the end however they were reconciled and all misunderstandings were cleared. Dabir was always respectful towards his *Ustad* and never permitted others to speak ill of him. Dabir was already famous when Anis came from Fyzabad. The poetical contests and rivalries with Mir Anis resulted in sharpening of poetical powers but the rivalries never transgressed the bounds of decorum or sank into the ribaldries of Mushaffi and Insha. Both were courteous and respectful to each other and seldom appeared together. In 1291 A. H. (1874 A. D.) Mirza became blind

but Wajid Ali Shah who was living in Calcutta called him and he was successfully treated by an expert ophthalmist. Like Anis, he did not leave Lucknow until after the annexation. In 1858 A. D. he went to Murshidabad and in 1859 A. D. to Patna. He died in 1292 A. H. (1875 A. D.) in Lucknow and was buried in his house.

Dabir was a perfect master of elegiac poems and had devoted his whole life for the attainment of this object. He shared all the qualities of Anis but was fond of dignified expressions and high sounding words. His verses are torrents rushing with rapidity, force and high sound. He pays particular attention to flights of fancy and freshness of ideas. It may be that sometimes the effect scored is not commensurate with the importance of the subject. The scholar often peeps out in Dabir. He was specially adroit in intercallating Arabic verses of the Quaran in his marsias with surprising skill and striking effect. To compose quickly and well was one of the greatest of his gifts. The fecundity of his ideas is remarkable. The picturesque and rare similes, the majesty of the verses, the high flown metaphors, the resounding words, the elegance of the diction, the quickness of his intelligence, the facile skill in composing stirring poems, the inventiveness of his genius all entitle him to a foremost rank beside Anis amongst Urdu poets.

Anis and Dabir compared.

The rivalries of these two great writers divided Lucknow into two camps which were respectively called Anisia (Anisites) and Dabiria (Dabirites). Their partisanship often degenerated into ridiculous and senseless discussions as each tried to prove the other a fool. To the historian, however, who refuses to be dragged into their petty and narrow debates, their comparison is none the less interesting and instructive. Both lived in the same age having been born nearly at the same time and died within a year of each other. Both were devoted to the same species of composition and lived in the same environments and atmosphere. Anis and Dabir were both most prolific writers and were acknowledged as masters. Anis however was a poet by descent and received poetry as an inheritance. Dabir had no such 'pride of descent' Both are masters in their own sphere. Anis pays particular attention to the refinement, the purity, sweetness, flow, aptness and elegance of diction and idiom. Dabir devotes more care to the invention of ideas, flights of imagination, search for new and rare similes, majesty and pomp of words. Eloquence is the watchword of Anis. Grandeur is the motto of Dabir. It is true that the verses of Anis are free from clumsy constructions and involved metaphors while Dabir is a victim to them, for his scholarship and his love for originality betray him on such occasions. Dabir was more learned than Anis and

this want of erudition in Anis was both a source of strength and weakness to him.

It is invidious to rank the one over the other and the final test is that of taste. Both are supreme artists. It has been the fashion in some circles to underrate Dabir and assign him a position immeasurably below Anis. The truth lies in acknowledging him a master like Anis as was done by Amir and Asir who were their contemporaries. His reputation was very high in his own day as is manifest from the position of a *ustad* which he occupied and from the honour which he received from everybody.

The popularity of marsia.

Lucknow was and is a stronghold of Shias who profess the greatest veneration for the Martyrs of Karbala. The Mohurrum week is celebrated with the greatest enthusiasm and 'exaggeration' of sorrow. The Kings who were passionately fond of buildings, erected numerous Imambaras where people assembled and mourned the death of the Holy Martyrs in a befitting manner. Even the Kings held the month sacred, kept fasts and attended to the customary observances. At the time of Ghaziuddin Haider and Nasiruddin Haider the Mohurrum was celebrated with great pomp and show and sometimes the incidents verged on the ludicrous. The intensely religious-minded people found an outlet for their enthusiasm in marsia. Nobody, even a sceptic, dare openly flout the religious observances. To recite or compose a marsia has always been regarded as an act of devotion. Every writer of the Shiah sect would write a marsia or a line in praise of Ali to show his zeal and to gain merit. The Kings patronised the writers to hoodwink the public in the belief that they were religious at heart despite their indulgence in the gaieties and pleasures of the world and deceived themselves into the faith that a month of repentance and lamentations for the martyrs would atone for the sins of a whole year. The scholars and the poets appreciated it from the standpoint of art. It was the golden age of the marsia.

Achievement of the marsia.

It would be valuable to note what marsias achieved. Mir Zamir was a pioneer and introduced many new features in the marsia. He was probably the first to write a *Razmia* marsia (a marsia descriptive of battle and written in a martial vein); he invented the *Sarapa* (a full description from head to foot); he concentrated on the praises of horse, sword, arms, which he celebrated in his verses at considerable length with appropriate and fresh similes; he tried to paint pictures of various incidents of battle and described the scenes with elaboration and embellishments; he discarded many ugly, unpolished and uncouth words which

had hitherto formed the stock-in-trade of marsia-writers. Mir Anis and Dabir emphasised these features and built noble structures on the foundations laid by Zamir and Khaliq. In the hands of Anis and Dabir the marsia was made a perfect weapon capable of being used with the greatest effect. To Zamir, Anis and Dabir belongs the credit of demonstrating the value of musuddus in which marsias were written. Musuddus came to be recognised as the best vehicle for passionate and stirring poems. 'The ebb and flow of Islam'—one of the greatest and epoch-marking poem of Hali—a poem of national regeneration, is written in this six-line stanza. Sarur, one of the harbingers of the new light, has also utilised it for many of his 'national' and 'natural' poems. The Musuddus was then made the most popular and important of the forms of Urdu composition and has since been largely used for epic poetry by every class of writers.

The marsia heralds the dawn of a new era in Urdu poetry ushered in by Hali, Azad and Sarur Jahanabadi. The main characteristics of these poems of the 'new school' can all be traced in the marsia. The exordia contain beautiful and realistic pictures of scenes from nature. The continuity of description is surprising and the portrayal of human emotions is faithful. The language is flowing, sweet and crisp. The similes are fresh and beautiful.

The marsias transcended the artificiality and conventionality of the Lucknow school. They are oases in the desert of florid vacuum, and turgid bombast. They sound a note of real and genuine poetry full of fire and passion at once sublime and ennobling. Its didacticism is a pleasant welcome from the revolting sensualism of the court muse. A marsia, howmuchsoever inferior it may be in point of artistic workmanship, is moral in its tone and Urdu poetry much needed this corrective. The sacred subject demanded a dignified treatment and however ribald and debasing the poet may be in ghazal he always tried to be sublime and moral in this form of composition. The praise of bravery, magnanimity, chastity and justice in this 'tale of woe' is always ennobling and edifying. The vivid and graphic description of fights, single combats, *melees*, challenges and counter-challenges, the slaughter and the rescue add an element of epic poetry so long wanting in Urdu literature. These finished pictures can compare favourably with those found in the great epics of the world. The service rendered to the language is invaluable and immense. The five lacs of couplets composed by Dabir and Anis brought into play and use many words and idioms and thus amplified the stock of Urdu words. Incidentally frequent use greatly refined and polished them.

The marsia, as a standard composition greatly extended the limited field of Urdu Literature and is now regarded as an important weapon in the armoury of Urdu literature.

Minor Marsia-writers.

The other marsia-writers of the age may be enumerated *en passant*. Dilgir and Fasih have been noticed above. Miskin was a popular marsia-writer whose elegiac poems are frequently met with. Very little is known of his life except that his name is Mir Abdulla. He was eclipsed by the brighter lights—Anis, Dabir and Ishq. Afsurda, Nazim, Sikandar, Gada and Ahsan may fairly complete the list of the marsia-writers of that age.

House of Anis.

It is a remarkable fact that scholarship and poetry continued to flourish in the family of Anis from generation to generation and the fire has not died out yet. The torch of learning was handed down from father to son and it has not ceased burning. Commencing from Mir Imami to Mir Jalis, the grandson of Mir Anis, the names are: Khwajah Azizullah, Mir Zahak, Mir Hasan, Mir Khaliq, Mir Anis, Mir Nafis and Mir Jalis. The other members of the family are also distinguished writers.

Mir Munis.

Mir Mohammad Nawab Munis, the younger brother of Anis, was a brilliant writer of marsias. He, however, led a retired life and was eclipsed by the greater glory of his elder brother. He used to read marsias in a very attractive and effective manner. Raja Amir Hasan Khan Saheb of Mahmudabad was his pupil in marsia and made him handsome allowance. Munis had no son. He died in 1292 A. H.

Mir Nafis.

Mir Khurshed Ali Nafis was a worthy son of Anis and preeminent amongst his brothers Mir Salis and Mir Rais. He was a credit to his father who was also his poetical master. He carried on the traditions of his family most gloriously. He was a man of considerable literary attainments and has left a large collection of his marsias and other compositions. He died in 1318 A. H. (1901 A. D.) at the age of eighty-five.

Aarif.

Syed Ali Mohammad Aarif, son of Syed Mohammad Haidar who had married the daughter of Mir Nafis, was born in 1859 A. D. Nafis supervised his education and taught him the art of poetry. Maharaja Sir Mohammad Ali Mohammad Khan of Mahmudabad consulted him in poetry and gave him an allowance of rupees one hundred and twenty-five. He was proficient in the art of writing marsias and commanded great influence in literary circles in Lucknow. He was acknowledged as a great authority on the Urdu language. His marsias have great moving power and are very effective. He concentrates himself on the

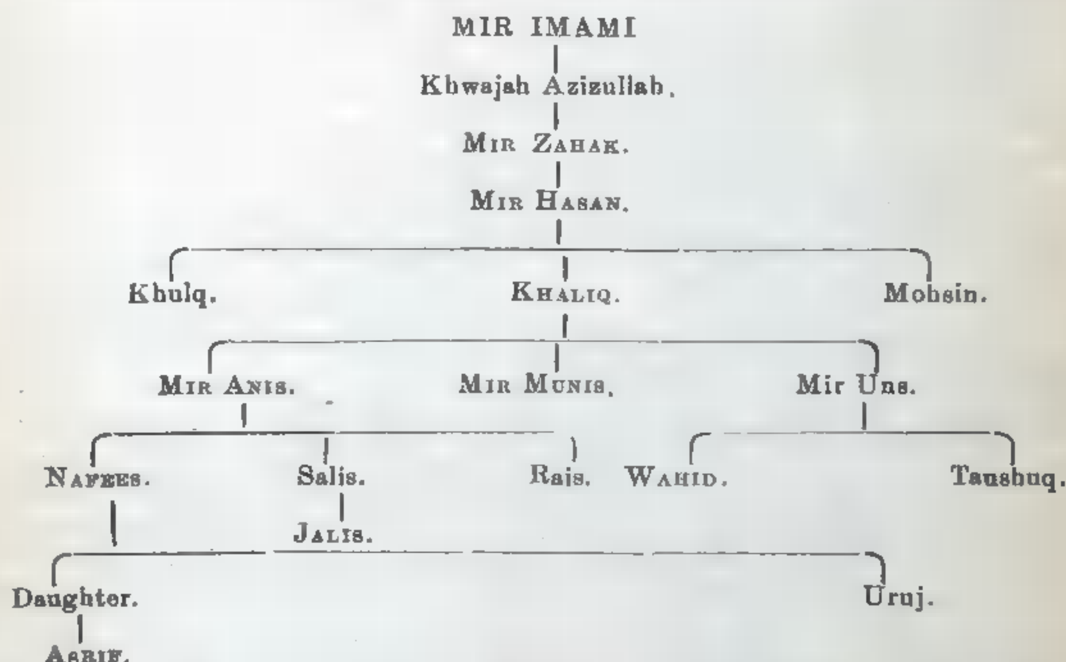
story and does not indulge in exordia containing descriptions of spring as Rashid does. He died in 1334 A. H. when he was fifty-seven years of age.

Mir Jalis.

Syed Abu Mohammad Jalis was the son of Mir Salis and a pupil of Rashid. He had a promising future before him but he died young in 1325 A. H. He wrote marsias and ghazals and was making a name for himself.

Other practitioners of marsia in the family of Anis are: Uruj, Faiq, Hasan and Qadim.

A family tree showing important names which are blackened would be interesting and is given below:—



House of Syed Mirza Uns.

Another great house that distinguished itself in the sphere of marsia was that of Syed Mirza Uns. It is necessary to notice a few important members of the family.

Syed Mirza Uns.

Syed Mohammad Mirza poetically surnamed Uns was the son of Syed Ali Mirza and grandson of Syed Zulfikar Ali Mirza. He has left a diwan which is unpublished and is preserved in his family. Every Sunday he collected poets of eminence at his house. Qalaq, Bahr, Asir, Mir Kallu, Ursh, Falak and others invariably attended. In the days of the Nawab Kings of Oudh Uns used to get a monthly stipend of hundred rupees from their court. After the annexation of Oudh and the Indian Mutiny of 1857 A. D. Uns had to seek his livelihood elsewhere. Through the intercession of his friend Munawaruddaulah Bahadur he obtained the

post of darogha in the household of Nawab Malika Jahan, wife of Mohammad Ali Shah. He discharged his duties with zeal and honesty and rose high in favour. In 1275 A.H. Nawab Kalb Ali Khan of Rampur sent his poetical master Amir Minai to bring Uns to Rampur. Uns responded to the summons and went there but stayed for a very short time. He died in 1302 A. H. at the ripe age of ninety-five. As a poet he is little known as his diwan was not published at his request. He is a creditable pupil of Nasikh and writes with ease and vigour. He is better known as the father of Ishq and Taashuq. He had three other sons and their names are: Ahmad Mirza Sabir, Syed Abbas Mirza Sabr and Syed Nawab Mirza Ashiq.

Hussain Mirza Ishq.

Ishq was one of the foremost writers of marsia of his age. He was a contemporary of Anis and Dabir and was equally respected and admired. He was a great master of his art and his work is faultless. He is not so well known as his compositions warrant. His grandson Askari Mirza Muaddab is also a marsia-writer and is a pupil of his uncle Rashid.

Syed Mirza Taashuq.

Syed Mirza Taashuq is a great master of marsia and ghazal. He was popularly known in Lucknow as Syed Sahab. Taashuq spent a great part of his life in Karbala as he did not wish to be declared as a rival of his brother Ishq. He went to Karbala twice and only returned on the death of his brother when he won plaudits from his admirers for his splendid compositions. He wrote marsia and ghazal with facility and distinction. He was a pupil of Nasikh but his verses are pre-eminent for subtlety of thought, beauty of diction and emotional qualities of high order. Extravagant claims have been put forward by partisans for Taashuq but posterity refuses to go into ecstasies over all his verses. It must however be admitted that he was a born poet and his verses are full of fire and pathos and he deserves to rank high amongst the poets of his age in view of the excellence of his marsias and ghazals. He was a great favourite of Mir Anis. He died in 1309 A. H. at the age of seventy. He left a son whose name was Mirza Taaluq.

Ahmad Mirza Sabir.

Sabir is noticed here because of his distinguished son Rashid. In 1263 A.H. Sabir was married to a daughter of Anis and thus the two houses of Anis and Uns were united. He was a pensioner of Wajid Ali Shah and also acted as a darogha of Nawab Malika Jahan. Wajid Ali Shah liked him and appointed him as an officer in the household of his wife Zuhra Mahal. Sabir used to compose replies to the

amatory poetical epistles of the king to his wife in the same strain. He was seventy-two years of age when he died in 1311 A. H.

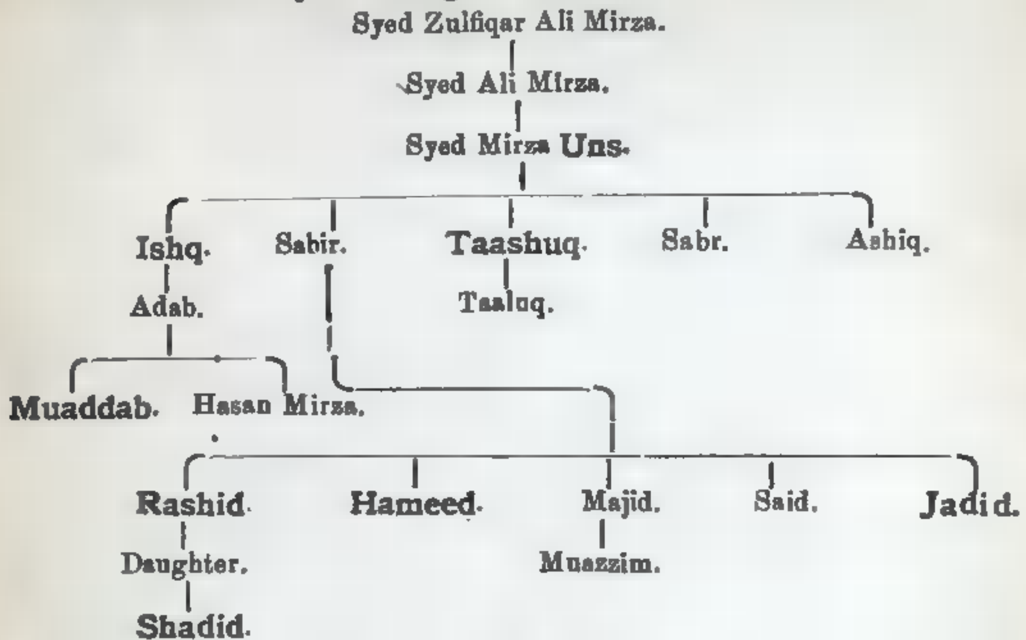
Pearay Sahib Rashid.

Syed Mustafa Mirza *alias* Pearay Sahab poetically surnamed Rashid was born in 1223 A. H. and was educated according to the mode of the time. He married the daughter of Mir Askari, one of the sons of Mir Anis. He was a Shia. In poetry he was a pupil of his uncle Ishq although he showed some of his ghazals to Mir Anis too. He consulted Taashuq after the death of Ishq and was largely influenced by his style in the writing of ghazals and marsia. Rashid paid great attention to language and followed in the footsteps of Anis. He wrote marsias, ghazals, salaams and rubais copiously. He also wrote qasidas though less frequently. His ghazals are distinguished for their sweetness, flow and purity of idiom but there is no depth of emotion or suggestion and very little originality of thought. He disfavoured Persian constructions. His salaams are moulded on ghazals. He is an adept in the writing of rubais. They are mostly on old age and are very poignant and pathetic. It is as a marsia-writer that Rashid is pre-eminent. He learnt the art from his uncles and considered it as his heritage. He has contributed to the development of marsia by introducing two new features—*Saqinama* and *Bahar*. This has given the marsia a greater literary flavour. These new features do not mar the beauty or devotional quality of the marsia. The descriptions are introduced incidentally but not inaptly. It must be admitted that Anis, Dabir and Nafis employed such themes but they did so casually in a limited manner. Rashid gave them greater prominence and treated them at greater length.

In 1894 A.D. he had the honour of reciting his marsis before the Nawab of Rampur. He also visited Azimabad (Patna) where he was greeted with salvos of applause. At the invitation of Nawab Bahramuddaulah Rashid visited Hyderabad where he was accorded the proud privilege of reciting his marsias before the Nizam who greatly appreciated and honoured him. Rashid also visited Calcutta, Salempur and Cawnpore. He died in 1336 A.H. at the age of seventy-four. He left many pupils. The most noted are: Syed Baqar Saheb Hamid his brother who died in 1339 A. H., Muaddab, Professor Nasiri, Jalis, Ashhar who wrote the life of Rashid, Shadid, Nazim and Farhad.

Rashid was a towering personality in the world of letters of Lucknow and was looked upon as a great master and an authority on language. He united in himself the two currents of the

marsia and the ghazal and practised both with great credit and success. The family tree is given below :—



House of Dabir Auj.

Dabir left a worthy son in Mirza Mohammad Jafar poetically surnamed Auj who followed in the footsteps of his father. He was the recipient of many bounties from Patna, the courts of Hyderabad (Deccan) and Rampur and the wealthy Shia barons of Oudh. He was a great scholar and was regarded as an authority on prosody on which he has published a treatise. He received the high honour of being heard by the Nizam, an honour shared by Jadid Aarif and Rashid.

Naat.

Another species of composition largely practised by writers with a religious bent of mind is the *Naat*—the praise of the Prophet Mohammad. Many writers have composed whole diwans, the most famous being Amir Minai and Muhsan Kakorwi.

CHAPTER XI.

THE STRAGGLERS—NAZIR AKBARABADI AND NASIR DEHLVI.

Nazir Akbarabadi died 1830 A. D.—A class by him.

Nazir Akbarabadi is a class by himself and cannot be said to belong to any school or to a particular age. He was born in the reign of Mohammad Shah about the time of the invasion of Delhi by Nadir Shah. He was thus a contemporary of Sauda, Mir and other poets of an earlier age. He also lived with the poets of a later age—Insha, Juraat and Nasikh. He was thus a straggler who by his long life projected himself into different ages. He is also different in his poetry and cannot be said to belong to the earlier class of poets by his modernity, to the later class of Delhi poets by his freedom and independence in themes and their treatment, to the Lucknow school by his contempt for its artificiality and conventionality and to the modern Delhi school of Ghalib, Zauq and Momin by his affection for simplicity and disdain for Persianized constructions and scholarly verses.

Wali Mohammad poetically called Nazir, son of Mohammad Faruq, was born at Delhi. His father lavished all his wealth of affection on him as he was the only son amongst twelve children to survive their infancy. On the impending invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdalli in the reign of Emperor Ahmad Shah he left Delhi with his mother and her mother for Agra where he settled in Taj Ganj near the famous Taj Mahal. He was married to Tahawwar Begum, daughter of one Mohammad Rehman, and left a son called Khalifa Gulzar Ali and a daughter called Imami Begum. He went through the customary curriculum of the Persian course. He read a little of Arabic and had some pretensions to calligraphy, an art very popular in those days.

He was of a contented nature and refused to go to Nawab Saadat Ali Khan of Lucknow who called him to join his court. He also declined an invitation to the court of the Raja of Bharatpur. In his early youth he went to Muttra to seek service as a teacher but came back and settled at Agra where he earned his living as a private tutor. He went to Farrukhabad many times. He was a tutor to the son of Lala Bilas Ram at Agra who paid him a salary of rupees seventy per month.

In the last years of his life he was prostrated by a stroke of paralysis and eventually he died at a ripe old age on 16th August 1830 A. D. (as is indicated by a chronogram composed by one of his pupils (Lyall has 1832 A. D. but he gives no authority).

He was extremely gregarious and to his sociability and geniality he owes a fund of valuable experience which he turns to good use in his compositions. He was very fond of music, physical-culture exercises, sight-seeing and festivals. He was witty and humorous, lowly and humble and very courteous and unassuming. He had wide sympathies and a breadth of views and was popular with all the sects of Mohamedans and Hindus.

In his early youth he was addicted to material pleasure and devoted to courtesans and much of obscenity in his verses pertains to that period ; but towards the evening of his life he repented and became a Sufi and his work of this period is most valuable and far too precious to be lost to the world. It is said that he was specially attached to one *demi monde* called Moti (Pearl) and that he had drunk the dregs of the bazaar life. His pictures of low life, but for an element of sensualism, are extremely realistic and interesting.

His works.

He was a most prolific writer and his verses are computed to exceed two lacs but most of his work is lost or kept in his family. The available works do not exceed more than 6,000 distichs, which were copied from the note-books of the sons of Lala Bilas Rai. Nazir never cared to preserve his poems.

Nazir as a moralist and a teacher.

If the debased portion of his poems is discarded he can rank with the greatest moralists in the world. His admonitions are those of a fakir pleading contempt of worldly wealth and power and exhorting to a better life in which good impulses and refined emotions have free play. He wrote eleven religious poems comprising many stanzas which are on the lips of every fakir. To him the world is a '*Vanitas Vanitatum*'. He eulogised generosity in his verses. His allegories, in beautiful verses, strike a note at once ennobling and enthralling. His pictures about the 'all conquering death' and his *Banjara-nama,* plead for a renunciation of pride in worldly goods and for a higher life of self-sacrifice and charity. He is with aptness compared to Saadi of Sheraz for his simplicity, his sufism, his erotic sentiments and his didacticism. He became a Sufi and transcended the petty communal schisms and religious differences which lay in ceremonials, rituals and external observances. His sufistic poems are remarkable and can rank with the best in any language. He saw 'unity in diversity'. "Peace and goodwill to all" was his motto. Hindus and Mohamedans of all persuasions were his ardent admirers and revered him as a 'guru'. After his death thousands of Hindus flocked to his funeral and conducted it according to their own rites and ceremonies. Like Nanak he is the poet of fakirs and wandering mendicants wedded to poverty, who

exhort people to a less entitled worldly life, as Wordsworth admonishes us in his sonnet entitled 'The world is too much with us'. His wide sympathies, his catholicity of views, his contempt for bigotry lend an unusual charm to his poems not found in works of other poets.

Nazir, essentially an Indian poet.

His wide sympathies not only extend to human beings but to birds, animals, and even inanimate objects. His songs about birds and his descriptions of bulbul fights, are extremely pleasant to read and show his wonderful knowledge of details. He is a favourite of young children for whom he has written numerous poems—on childhood, nursery tales, on kite flying, on swimming; on festivals—Dewali, Holi, Basant (spring) and Id; on fairs, on schools and tyranny of school masters, on bear fights, on monkey shows, etc. Nazir was especially possessed of the joy of life. He heartily joined in all its activities and sometimes his sympathies were misplaced and consequently they played him false by dragging him through the mire of sensuality and obscenity. He however came out richer in experience, which he turned to gold in his poems in later life. He was intensely human and partook of all the activities of the world with an ardour and enthusiasm worthy of a schoolboy. He describes common scenes with such a wealth of details as to extort admiration and applause. His knowledge is varied and limitless, his vocabulary inexhaustible, his simplicity enchanting and his verses simple and charming. To his unconventionality and breadth of view, to his utter contempt for the ties of orthodoxy and to his intimate association with Hindus, he owes his wonderful knowledge of customs and manners of Hindus, their mode of thought and speech, their words and idioms and their festivals which he utilized so skilfully in his numerous poems. There is no sneer, no contempt for them. He thus gives a local colour which is found wanting in most poets and present only in a very slight degree in Sauda and Insha. Nazir is essentially an Indian poet. He is thoroughly Indian in his thought, speech, language and themes.

His service to the language.

His service to the language is immense and valuable. He utilized words which had long been despised. Because they did not form part of the recognised 'stock-in-trade of poets' they were thought to be common, vulgar and not fit for literary use. To Nazir belongs the credit of demonstrating that beauties which were undreamt of before lay hidden in those neglected words. It is true that all the words he sponsored did not survive but many had a sturdy life and were allowed the *entree* of the literary world. His words can be divided into three classes. Firstly, the brick-bats,

which comprise of obscene and low words used largely in his earlier compositions. They are useless. Secondly, the stones, utilized for building purposes not beautiful but useful. Thirdly, the gems, which are prized for their poetic beauties and hidden treasures of meaning enriching Urdu vocabulary satiated with the drinks at the fountain head of Persian. In fact the charges against Nazir as a poet are that he is wanting in scholarship, that he is a commonplace and incorrect poet writing for the bazaar people, that he is obscene and undignified and that he has corrupted and tainted the language by introducing debased and vulgar words. The other charges will be dealt with later on, but in the supposed weakness of Nazir lies his strength and superiority. He describes common scenes and festivals popular with all classes of people and he must needs adopt their homely phraseology. He is a realistic poet and he could make them vivid only when he reproduced faithfully their thoughts and their language. He is no philosophical writer on festivals who moralises on the peccadillœs of the people who have come out for enjoyment. He does not castigate them for their petty foibles, delinquencies and stupidity. To make the pictures real and graphic he must portray them as they are. He does not see festivals and feasts with the spectacles of books and scholarship. Therein lies the charm of his verses which are crisp, natural, simple and spontaneous. He is not artificial and conventional in themes and language. Hali ranks him over Anis in the range and greatness of vocabulary. Nazir, on these occasions, was neither a philosopher nor a satirist. He was one amongst the crowd sharing its excitement, fun and merriment. Satire and lampoon he never touched. He sturdily maintained his robust independence for he never flattered a powerful Nawab or a Raja and never wrote an eulogium in their honour or for their delectation—beautiful traits in his character which shine resplendently amongst the dross which disfigured his life.

Nazir, a sign post of the new movement in Urdu poetry.

Nazir has another claim to be remembered. He is the true harbinger of the new school of national and natural poetry brought into being by Azad, Hali and Sarur. He contributed the most towards the birth of the school. Anis and Dabir with their scholarship gave pictures of battlefields and landscapes. To Nazir belongs the credit of supplying portraits of objects of human interest independent of any theme. He makes an appeal to all classes of people. There are no Persianized constructions, no polyglot words, no far-fetched similes. His style is simple, unconventional and spontaneous. The descriptions are vivid and realistic. The sentiments are not

recondite or incapable of apprehension. Nature is not worshipped by him in the abstract. There are no glowing descriptions of forests and mountain peaks. Nature serves as a background for human beings. His descriptions of garden apply to those of Agra. He is essentially human—throbbing, palpitating with life. His poems have a continuity of description which is usually found lacking in Urdu poetry. There is however no profundity of thought in him. By his simple and spontaneous treatment, in unconventional language, of subjects of human interest and national festivals, by his charming and genuine poetry freed from artificiality and sameness, he aided in the birth of a new school, destined to play an important part in the language, literature, and national consciousness of Indians.

His humour compared and contrasted with that of Insha.

Nazir was also remarkable for his sense of humour which was developed by his association with people of all classes and conditions. His social intercourse, his sympathy with the simple joys and sorrows of common people, gave him a wonderful insight into human nature and increased his fund of humour and wit. He bears poverty and distress with quiet resignation and humour and thus parries their blows and robs misfortunes of their stings. His wit is however not boisterous and his humour does not indulge in horse play. He is to be distinguished from Insha. Insha's humour is that of a courtier meant to please his sovereign ridiculing himself and everybody to the delight of his patron. Nazir's humour is the humour of a gentleman occasionally lapsing into profanity but always independent, self-respecting and not subservient. Insha's wit smacks of flattery and buffoonery while Nazir's is free from such taints. It is remarkable that he has many points of resemblance with his contemporary Insha. Both delight in stiff rhymes and difficult metres in ghazals and have attempted the same measures. Both are masters in intercallating Arabic verses, both have local colour, Hindi words and Indian themes in their poems, both have composed in various languages, both have a golden thread of sufism running through their erotic sentiments and both are unconventional in the use of language. Insha however maintains the purity of Persian and Arabic words, was a greater scholar, does not employ archaic words so largely, and was a greater wit.

Nazir as an artist.

The love of music was very helpful to Nazir in his selection of words. He is an artist and a great word painter. He chooses words with the same care as Tennyson does. He is fond of alliteration and uses words having sounds echoing the sense. In description of fights and frays he uses harsh gutturals whose clangour imitates the din of the battles. He uses soft liquids to narrate feasts and festivals.

The sounds of musical instruments find a reproduction in the sounds of words meant to describe them. He uses similes in moderation. His figures of speech never obtrude offensively but are always subordinated to the theme.

Who makes the nearest approach to Shakespeare in Urdu Literature ?

It would be interesting to know who makes the nearest approach to Shakespeare in Urdu Literature. There was no drama amongst the Persians and Urdu writers did not borrow it from Sanskrit. Sauda may claim consideration for his gigantic genius, force of personality, intimate knowledge of details and command over language. He shines best in his satires and would have made an admirable comedian. He has however no sympathy and his knowledge of human nature was limited. Mir is eminently a poet of tears and sorrows and shows no characterization and is circumscribed in his experience in other aspects of life. Insha had a superabundance of wit and humour and would have made an eminent actor-dramatist, with his qualities of mimicry, command over languages and geniality. But he was bound to the court and lacked profundity of thought. Anis and Dabir had real poetic gifts, command over language and power to delineate characters. But their range was limited. They were marsia writers first and last. This limitation was both a source of strength and weakness. The Persian passion plays, which may be compared to the miracle and mystery cycles—the nearest approaches to, and the earlier stages of, regular drama, form the themes of the marsias of Anis and Dabir but the religious fervour which dominate their poetry gives no scope for describing ordinary human beings—their joys and sorrows, their feelings and thoughts. Nazir's command over language was equal to that of Insha, Sauda and Anis. His knowledge of human beings was superior to most. He was intimate with Hindus and Mohammedans, children and old men, wealthy and poor, rustics and town-dwellers, fakirs and worldlings, profligates and saints. His knowledge of women is also creditable though no pure pictures of maidenhood and womanhood such as of Imogen, Desdemona, Portia and Ophelia could be found. This limitation is the limitation of society which does not believe in the freedom of women and holds fast to the seclusion of women. Nazir had no opportunities of mixing with high-born ladies and had no chance to know their purity of thought. He found dancing girls in the range of his experience and his verses are thus pictures of their low and immoral life. He was a great delineator of character and realistic in his descriptions but he is not so profound as Shakespeare nor does he possess a mighty genius like him. There are however two of his masnavis which partake of the characteristics of drama in some degree though they cannot be called dramas. His story of Leila and Majnoon is a tragedy and his 'Marriage of god Mahadeo' is a pure comedy with its

humorous descriptions. His description of bear fights and bulbul fights are extremely comic and realistic. He has not the force of Sauda, the profundity of Mir, the wit of Insha, the passionate fervour of Anis and Dabir, but he unites in himself in a moderate degree all the qualifications.

To Nazir belongs the credit of investing trite and common place subjects with a charm not found elsewhere in other dignified compositions. It is a pleasant release from the monotony of ghazals and the bombast of qasidas. He breaks new ground and extends the field of Urdu literature. It is true he is not scholarly and he does not depict things philosophically or with great depth. He is occasionally obscene and paints scenes with realism sometimes revolting to a sense of decorum. He may not be a great master of verse and people may detect solecisms in his technique and constructions, he may not be a purist in his language and sentiment but he is essentially an Indian poet with Indian themes, with Indian aspirations who rises superior to schisms and sects. For the wide range of his subjects, for the didactic nature of his compositions, for the breadth of his views, for the wide appeal to every class of people, for his Indian themes and language, for the impulse to the new school, Nazir deserves to be ranked amongst the foremost poets and writers of Urdu literature.

Nasir Dehlvi, died 1840 A. D.

Nasir like Nazir belongs to the category of earlier poets by virtue of his language and age, but he obtained prominence in a later period. He therefore serves as a link between the old and new schools.

Nasiruddin poetically surnamed Nasir commonly called Mian Kallu by reason of his black complexion, was the son of Shah Gharib and a native of Delhi. His father led a retired life being in charge of some trusts and supported himself with the income of some villages which he held as a Jagir from the Moghul emperors. Nasir was insufficiently educated but he displayed early signs of a bright poetic career. He became a pupil in poetry of one Ma'il who through Qasim connected him with Sauda and Mir Dard. He secured an entry in the court of Shah Alam by reason of his good birth and poetic talents and was a recipient of its bounties. He travelled much and visited many cities particularly Lucknow and Hyderabad (Deccan). He used to convene poetical assemblies at his house at Delhi in which many poets of the day used to recite their compositions. Zauq, the celebrated pupil of Nasir, attempted his first flights in these reunions.

With the decay of power of the Moghul emperors and the diminution of bounty and patronage the poets dispersed to seek 'fresh woods and pastures new'.. Nasir visited Lucknow twice

and Hyderabad four times. In his first visit to Lucknow it was the age of Insha, Mushaffi and Juraat and with them he took part in poetical contests there. His second visit took place when Nasikh and Atish were reigning supreme. He measured his strength with Nasikh and emerged triumphant. He went to Hyderabad at the time of Diwan Chandu Lal poetically entitled Shadan who was a great patron of men of letters and who held poets of Delhi in high esteem. He extended invitations to Zauq and Nasikh but they refused. Nasir gave an impulse to Urdu poetry at Hyderabad and enrolled many persons as his pupils. He died at Hyderabad in 1254 A. H. (1840 A. D.).

His works.

He was a most voluminous writer and had been writing verses for over 60 years. His long practice, his quickness of intelligence, the fertility of his ideas and his sole devotion to poetry must be responsible for hundreds of thousands of couplets. Much of his composition is lost as he did not care to preserve it. One of his pupils Maharaj Singh collected his poems into a Diwan comprising of 1,00,000 verses. It is said by some that his Diwan was compiled by Mir Abdul Rahman, son of Mir Taskin a pupil of Momin and the manuscript copy of this Diwan was purchased by the Nawab of Rampur for his library.

Nasir as man.

He was by nature a very polite and an agreeable man, witty and genial, and has left a host of pupils in Delhi, Lucknow and Hyderabad. He was of Sunni persuasions but was not a bigot and was very tolerant. He, however, snubbed presumption, refused to correct Zauq's verses when he saw that he had aspirations for poetical fame unbefitting to his age and had the audacity to attempt to rival the great master, Sauda. These and many other differences led to a rupture between Nasir and Zauq.

Nasir's position in Urdu Literature.

He was very fond of stiff metres and difficult rhymes and he was specially adroit and facile in composing odes in those measures. This is the outstanding feature of his works. He delighted in the use of stately words and was well versed in the technique of poetry. His similes and metaphors are fresh through commonplace. Like Nasikh he introduces an apt simile in the second hemistich to illustrate the first which contains some moral lesson in the approved style of the Persian poet Saib. He was a great improvisatore. He however lacked scholarship and is archaic in language. Though he writes with vigour and fire his poetry is deficient in the profundity and suggestiveness of the highest art. He occupies an important place amongst the second-rate poets of Urdu Literature. There is nothing very distinctive or original about him in his works but he enjoyed very great celebrity as a Ustad of his age and had a host of distinguished pupils.

CHAPTER XII.

COURT OF DELHI AND ITS POETS—PART III.

THE AGE OF GHALIB AND ZOUQ.

Revival of poetry in Delhi.

Delhi once more shot into brilliance and towered high. The centre of patronage had shifted to Lucknow but the seeds thrown by former geniuses did not decay but blossomed forth into flowering trees. The law of ebb and flow, crescendo and diminuendo, the crest and the hollow of the wave, the alternate swings of the pendulum governed the destiny of Delhi. Delhi from a temporary lull burst forth into such a melodious chant as to enthral the whole Urdu-speaking world by its ecstatic harmonies. Ghalib, Zouq, Zafar and Momin represent the triumph of Urdu poetry. Ghalib with his gigantic genius can be ranked with the world's best poets. Zouq and Momin though eclipsed by the great orb shine resplendently in the galaxy of Urdu poets. Zafar, the *nom de poete* of the last titular king of Delhi, Bahadur Shah II, was a poet of no mean order and having no cares of the empire to weigh on his mind wooed the muse devotedly and assiduously under the guidance of Zouq and Ghalib. They are unaffected by the change of style in Lucknow where affectation, artificiality and conventionalism reigned supreme. They advert to the fount of true emotion and genuine sentiment. Ghalib and Momin indulge in persianization which was a result of their being great scholars and Persian poets. Momin and Ghalib in his earlier days, reverted to the old practice of ousting the more homely although crisp idiom for the learned and the scholarly. Urdu verses were nothing but strings of Persianized constructions and idioms and Hindi idioms were utilized only when they enhanced the beauty of or fitted in with the Persian idiom.

With the death of Momin and Ghalib there was an appreciable decrease in the excessive use of Persian constructions. Syntax was less involved. The verses were neat and flowing. The pupils of Momin and Ghalib aimed at simplicity of style. There was greater flow of the language. This tendency is clearly marked in the verses of Salik, Hali, Zaheer, Anwar and Majruh.

Momin, 1215-1268 A.H. (1800-1851 A.D.)

Momin, the *nom de poete* of Momin Khan of Delhi, was the son of Hakim Namdar Khan, a court physician and a recipient of the bounty of Shah Alam. His ancestors were nobles of Kashmir. Hakim Namdar Khan held some villages as a *jagir* and on the assumption of the sovereignty by the British he received a pension, a part of which was continued to his son, Momin Khan.

Momin showed early signs of intelligence and great poetic capabilities. He had a very powerful and retentive memory, and

he became a great Persian scholar and attained considerable proficiency in Arabic and medicine, the latter being hereditary, which he learnt from his father and uncles. He was passionately fond of astronomy and astrological calculations and his predictions were wonderfully correct. By the surprising accuracy of his results he commanded the faith of the people who consulted him frequently to their satisfaction. He was a good chess player and had a reputation for great skill and keenness in that game. Astrology and medicine were pastimes to him for he never made them the means of his livelihood.

Being a man of prepossessing appearance and voluptuous temperament, he sowed his wild oats in the city. He was a votary at the shrine of Venus and his *amours* were the talk of the city. These dissolute courses were soon over and he repented and led a reformed life punctiliously keeping the fasts and offering the prayers at stated hours. These excursions into pleasure and profligacies administered fuel to his poetic fire and specially qualified him to write erotic poetry. Poetical gifts of high order, however, transcended sordid passion and showed glimpses of Love Divine. He became a pupil of Shah Nasir who like Mushaffi was a well-known *ustad* in literary circles of his day. The connection lasted a very short time and Momin afterwards depended upon his own critical faculties.

He left Delhi five times and visited Rampur, Sahsawan, Jahangirabad and Saharanpur but his love for Delhi always drew him like a magnet. When Ghalib refused the Professorship of Persian in Delhi College in 1842 A. D. Mr. Thomson made a similar offer to Momin who refused to leave Delhi on a salary of Rs. 100. He similarly refused an offer of Rs. 350 per mensem from the Maharaja of Kapurthala when he learnt that a singer was paid the same salary. Nawab Waziruddaulah Bahadur, ruler of Tonk, sent for him to live with him at Tonk but he declined to go as he was in love with Delhi and its gaieties. A sturdy independence, refusing to crave favours at the doors of the wealthy and the noble, was the main trait of his character. He composed only one qasida in praise of Raja Ajpat Singh who presented him an elephant, as if the Raja was honouring himself by the bestowal of the gift.

He was very vain of his accomplishments and held a very low opinion of poets, ancient and modern. He held in contempt the mighty Saadi the sweet nightingale of Shiraz and treated his great contemporaries Ghalib and Zouq with disdain and sneered about their proficiency in Persian and their poetical attainments. He was specially skilful in composing chronograms in a terse and epigrammatic form in various figures of speech.

He has left a diwan and six masnavis, a few enigmas and quatrains and other forms of composition affected by Urdu poets.

The diwan was arranged by his pupil Shaifta and published in 1846 A. D. by Karimuddin, author of *Tazkirah-i-Shaurai Hind.*

His style.

Momin is distinguished by subtleties of his thought and high flights of his fancy. His similes and metaphors are above the commonplace and lend distinction to his verses. He combines in himself loftiness of thoughts with real poetic fire which is found lacking in the Lucknow school. He is pre-eminently a love poet but he escapes the commonplace by his scholarship and poetic flights. In him the Persianization of construction begins to make its appearance as in Ghalib for both were erudite Persian scholars. Occasionally, these constructions fit ill and make the verses obscure and stiff. His masnavis have the poignancy and fire of a bruised heart of a lover. They are extremely passionate and echo the heart throbs of the lover in agony. They are, however, sensual and their tone is anything than elevated. The love described in them is of a low kind. They are on a par with the masnavi *Tilasm Ulfat* of Qalaq and *Zahar-i-Ishq* (1270 A.H.) and others of Nawab Mirza Shauq who was a pupil of Atish and who died in 1871 A. D. Momin is a master of suggestive poetry which opens vistas to the imagination but the excessive Persianization of construction and idiom has hindered his popularity.

His position as a poet.

He is entitled to a conspicuous position not only for his poetic talents and the very high estimation in which he was held by his contemporaries but also by virtue of his being the head of a school of which Naseem, Taslim, and Hasrat are prominent representatives. Some of his chief pupils in poetry are Nawab Mustafa Khan Shaifta, the author of a diwan and Tazkirah Gulshan-i-Bekhar, an important biographical account of Urdu poets compiled in 1834-35 A. D. Mir Hussain Taskin, Syed Ghulam Ali Wahshat, and Nawab Asbgher Ali Khan Nasim. Momin died in 1268 A.H. (1852 A. D.) from a fall from the roof of his house.

Shaifta 1221 A. H. —1286 A. H.

Nawab Mustafa Khan was the son of Nawab Murtiza Khan who was rewarded by Lord Lake with a large *jagir* of Hodul Palol for his meritorious services. Jahangirabad estate in District Bulandshahr was purchased by Nawab Mustafa Khan himself and is still in possession of his descendants. He was born in Delhi in 1806 A. D. and continued to reside there till the Indian Mutiny when he retired to his seat at Jehangirabad.

Nawab Mustafa Khan was a born poet and wrote copiously. He adopted the poetical surname of Hasrati in Persian and Shaifta in Urdu. It is said that he consulted Ghalib in Persian poetry and his poetical master in Urdu was Momin. Probably the fact is that he at first submitted his poems for correction to Momin

and after his death he had recourse to Ghalib who was his great friend. His genius ripened quickly in the literary atmosphere of that age. The famous literatures of the period—Moulvi Imam Bakhsh Sahbai, Abdulla Khan Alvi, Mufti Sadruddin Khan Azurda, Ghalib, Zauq, Naseer, Ahsan, Taskin and Hakim Agha Khan Aish—were all his friends. Poetical assemblies were convened weekly at his house and that of Azurda. He devoted himself less arduously to the muse of poetry when he returned from pilgrimage of the Holy places and paid more attention to religious practices and observances.

Shaifta is the author of a Persian diwan, a Urdu diwan, a collection of conventional compositions in Persian, a book of travels and a *tazkira* of Urdu poets in Persian.

Shaifta is better known for his criticism than for his verses. Even in his own day his reputation stood very high and he was regarded as a great critic and a recognised authority on Urdu and Persian poetry. Ghalib frequently pays homage for his excellent taste and discernment. Hali acknowledges him as a master. His *Gulshan-i-Bekhar*.(1250 A. H.) is one of the best known tazkiras and is the first one of its kind to contain impartial criticism and bears eloquent testimony to his critical acumen and independent judgment. As a Urdu poet he writes in the style of Momin. Choice sentiments about *Ikhlaq* (morality) and Tasawwaf (sufism) abound in his works. He is always sober. His Urdu verses though not brilliant are characterised by loftiness of conception, sublimity of thought, chaste language and refined sentiments. His place is in the ranks of second-rate poets. His son of Nawab Mohammad Ishaq Khan published a collection of Shaifta's Urdu and Persian works with his biography and a critique on his works in 1915 A.D. It is printed in the Nizami Press, Budaon.

Taskin 1218 A. H. –1268 A. H.

Mir Husain Taskin, son of Mir Ahsan alias Miran, was born at Delhi and studied Persian under the celebrated teacher Moulvi Imam Bakhsh Sahbai. At first Taskin consulted Naseer in poetry but after his death he became the pupil of Momin and achieved distinction. He visited Lucknow and Meerut in search of livelihood but he found an asylum at Rampur where Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan generously took him in service. He stayed at Rampur till his death and was buried there.

Taskin was regarded as a great poet and a distinguished pupil of Momin. He follows in the footsteps of his master and has successfully adopted his style. His son Mir Abdul Rahman Aasi stayed in Rampur till the time of Nawab Kalb Ali Khan and was a poet of some celebrity.

Nasim Delhvi (1794-1864 A. D.)

Nawab Asghar Ali Khan poetically surnamed Nasim (Zephyr) was born about the year 1214 A.H., (1794 A.D.) His father Nawab Aga Ali Khan occupied an honourable position amongst the nobles of Delhi. He was educated according to the customs of his family but on the death of his father he migrated to Lucknow with his brother Mirza Akbar Ali owing to dissensions amongst his other brothers. Nasim, proud by nature, was inexorable to the advances of friendship by his brothers and rejected their proffers and apology with disdain. He spent all his life in Lucknow in straitened circumstances but in his penury he never appealed to people for help. He was orthodox and observed the injunctions of the Quran faithfully and religiously with regard to prayers, fasts and other ceremonials. He was employed at the Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow, to translate the Arabian Nights into Urdu verse and he completed Book 1 but a demand of the proprietor for a speedy completion of the book was annoying to Nasim and he retired in favour of one Tota Ram. It was remarkable how he achieved popularity and success in Lucknow when the Lucknow school was in its full glory. He was a very facile writer and had written reams of verses which are now lost, as he did not care to preserve them. The diwan, now extant, was compiled by one of his pupils Abdul Wahid Khan, proprietor of Mustafai Press, but it was condemned by Nasim as containing his 'dross'. His ghazal exacted a graceful compliment from Ghalib. Despite his being a Delhvi and strictly conforming to the canons and literary traditions of his native place Nasim succeeded in getting a large following in Lucknow, chief amongst his pupils being Abdulla Khan Mihar, Ashraf Ali Ashraf and Amirullah Taslim, the *ustad* of Hasrat Mohani.

His style.

Nasim carried on the distinctive style of Momin. Exquisite and incomparable beauty of expression wedded to life-giving forms and imaginative fertility were a legacy from Momin, his master in poetry. He was an ardent champion of freshness and purity of language and idiom against the artificiality and stately bombast of Lucknow. He combines the beauty of expression with the artistic design and freshness of thought. He carries on the traditions of the school of Momin by indulging in Persianized constructions, loftiness of fancy, delicate and fresh diction, and flowing verses. Nasim ranks very high amongst the second-rate poets.

Zouq, 1204-1271 A. H. (1789-1854 A. D.)

Sheikh Ibrahim, generally known by his poetical appellation Zouq, was the son of Sheikh Mohammad Ramzan, a poor soldier, who acted as a darwan of the harem of Nawab Lutf Ali Khan, a noble of Delhi. He had no proud lineage or aristocratic connections to boast of; he had only the aristocracy of intellect which raised him to a

pinnacle of glory and honour and made him the ornament of his age and the cynosure of all eyes. Being born to penury he received very ordinary education from one Hafiz Ghulam Rasool who was the pedagogue for that quarter. Poetry was the craze in those days and Hafiz Ghulam Rasool who dabbled in poetry attended frequently the numerous poetic assemblies in Delhi. These contests gave an impact to his poetic soul and gave a fine edge to his early inclinations to compose verses. He learnt many verses and composed his own and submitted them for correction to his teacher Ghulam Rasool. One of his fellow students Mir Qazim Hussain Ali, enrolled himself as a pupil of Shah Naseer who had the reputation of being the best teacher of poetry and Zouq being impelled by a strong desire and not satisfied with the corrections of Hafiz Rasool also went and enlisted as Shah Naseer's pupil. The talents of the young poet aroused interest which threatened a blow to the supremacy of the old master and attempts were made to discredit the genius of Zouq which resulted in a rupture between the *ustad* and the pupil. The connection being severed, Zouq finished his poems himself and devoted himself with great energy to acquire mastery in that art. Gradually his beautiful productions acquired fame and popularity and were sung in streets and assemblies. The stronghold of Urdu poetry was the palace of Mirza Abu Muzaffar who ascended the throne later on under the title of Bahadur Shah II. The emperor Akbar Shah II was not a keen enthusiast of poetry but the crown prince was an ardent lover of poets and poetry. He held poetical assemblies in the 'fort' and many were the contests held in extemporaneous verses, which sharpened the intelligence and kindled the ardour of the budding poet. It was also the resort of the veterans of the art, Firaq, Ahsan, Ishq, Qasim, Shakeba, Azim and Minnat. To such an assemblage Zouq was introduced by his friend Mir Qazim Hussain Beqarar. Shah Naseer had meanwhile left Delhi and the duty of correcting the poems of the prince poetically entitled Zafar devolved on Qazim Hussain. He soon left Delhi as a Mir Munshi of John Elphinstone and Zouq stepped into his place on a paltry salary of Rs. 4 per mensem. Zouq's reputation as a poet stood high and he was sought as a master by the nobility and old practitioners of the art. In 1224 A. H. when he was only twenty years of age one Ilahi Bux Khan Maruf, a famous grandee of the Moghul court and a poet of considerable reputation and the father-in-law of Ghalib being attracted by his poetical powers and style submitted his compositions to him for correction. These two eminent personages as his pupils not only enhanced his reputation but also enabled him to form his own style and acquire mastery over various forms of composition. He had

to put forth his best and his diligence and practice stood him in good stead later in his career. Nawab Ilahi Bux, who was celebrated for his generosity, beneficence and saintly character and had a fair reputation as a poet, exacted the most from him. He had to correct the Nawab's verses in the style in which they were composed—the style of Sauda, Juraat, Dard and Insha.

Bout with Naseer.

On the return of Shah Naseer from the Deccan he again unfurled his banner of supremacy in Delhi and challenged the pre-eminence of the parvenu in birth and in poetry. Zouq took up the gauntlet and composed verses to order in stiff measures and rhymes as Naseer did and justified his title as a master of the heir-apparent, Zafar. Shah Naseer stung to the quick by the assumption of superiority set up one of his pupils to find fault with the compositions and many were the bouts held and repartees exchanged in the poetical assemblies. Zouq at last emerged triumphant and exacted the tribute of applause and appreciation by reason of his poetical powers of high order and brilliancy of his intellect. Zouq continued his studies privately. His position, however, was securely established. For his magnificent eulogies Akbar Shah II bestowed on him the much coveted and highly esteemed tile of 'Khaqani-i-Hind', Khaqani being a great Persian poet who excelled in qasidas.

Zouq's emoluments as the Emperor's Ustad.

The worldly prosperity of Zouq however did not keep pace with the advance of his poetical fame. He continued to draw Rs. 4 as pay which was increased to Rs. 5. He received a further increment of Rs. 25 when Zafar ascended the throne and after some time his salary was raised to Rs. 100. Zafar however rewarded him munificently when he had the power to do so. For his various panegyrics he conferred on Zouq the title of Khan Bahadur and gave *jagirs* and presents.

Zouq died in 1271 A. H. at the age of 68.

Zouq the man.

Zouq was noted for his acute intellect and powerful and retentive memory. He was a God-fearing man, having abundantly the milk of human kindness. He never killed an animal or a bird and had numerous diversions, *e.g.*, music, astrology, medicine, and thought-reading. He was however passionately devoted to poetry. He wooed the muse with such fervour and single-mindedness as to attain the rank of 'Fina-fil-shair' or one who had merged his existence in poetry. The studies he had begun were continued later on in life and he attained to a fair degree of scholarship which more than augmented the scanty learning of his earlier years. He acquired considerable proficiency in precedents history, tradition, sufism and astrology. Zouq had no worldly

ambitions. Such was his love for Delhi, that he refused an invitation of Diwan Chandulal Shadan of Hyderabad Deccan who was a lover of poetry and a patron of poets. He lived in a very small house in a narrow alley with no refinement or comfort. Lost as he was in poetry he cared little to the externals of life. In later years Zouq adhered to the precepts of the Quran religiously and spent much of his time in customary observances and prayer.

Why has he left a short diwan?

It would be expected that such a talented and facile writer whose sole orcupation was poetry and whose practice extended to over fifty years would have left many diwans comprising of hundreds of thousands of verses. It is true he wrote copiously and all his works would have filled many volumes but the claims of Zafar diverted his energies from his own diwan and his own compositions were lost in the Indian Mutiny. Mohammad Husain Azad, his devoted pupil who narrates this tale of woe, collected the remnants of his verses with the help of his other pupils Hafiz Wiran, Anwar and Zaheer and published the present diwan of Zouq which is only a poor souvenir of this great and talented poet.

His works.

Zouq was a master of the ghazal and the qasida and had left a considerable number of each. His masnavi, *Namai Jansoz* (Heart-burning Letter) running over to 500 couplets but still incomplete was a creditable performance which was lost in the Indian Mutiny of 1858 A. D. He is the author of many mukhummus, quatrains and chronograms, few of which have survived. He also composed songs and tunes which were appropriated by Zafar. Salaam, religious elegy (marsia) and satire he never attempted.

Zouq's contribution to and position in Urdu Literature.

Zouq's great contribution to Urdu literature is the polishing of the language. He was a great artist who knew the value of words. He is pre-eminent for his elegant diction. The idioms not imported from the lexicon of scholars but of homely origin and indigenous growth, were woven so adroitly and fluently as to excite admiration. His wonderful command over the technique of the verse, his love of harmony and concord, his mastery over varied and musical expressions, his great poetical powers, his vigour and force of imagination produced verses, finished and jewelled. None has a greater number of signal phrases memorable for thought or music. Nowhere can be found anything more delightful in word music.

His style.

His poetry is not florid. Similes, metaphors and figures of speech are judiciously used and subordinated to the general scheme of effect. They do not obtrude offensively. They are not paraded to show scholar-

ship and erudition. The verses are flowing and full of cadence. The beauty and harmony of language is not sacrificed to flights of imagination and loftiness of thought. The lines are terse and compact and move with vigour and force. There is no languid motion about them. In his power and versatility he compares with Sauda and often affects Sauda's style in ghazal and qasida. He does not however confine himself to one particular master but attempts in various styles quite successfully. In the qasida, Zouq carries away the palm from his contemporaries. Most of his qasidas are lost and the few available show his vigour, his poetical flights, his skill, his brilliance, his mastery over technique and his wide command of language. Few could excel him in this branch of poetry. His odes are distinguished by the freshness of subject, elegance of idiom and simple and harmonious language. He has written in the style of Nasir, Insha, Mushaffi and Juraat, Mir Dard and Sauda and sometimes of Nasikh. His Diwan has been called 'a bouquet of variegated flowers'. His poems in the style of Juraat with none of Juraat's faults are the best and appeal most. He is accused of want of scholarship and writing for the common. Such an accusation when his contemporaries were Persian scholars and Persian poets who were 'caviare to the general' was perfectly legitimate. His loftiness of fancies and subtleties of thought do not involve the sacrifice of perspicuity of language and harmony of verse. It is true that he is inferior to Ghalib as a thinker and a genius but he is his superior in beauty and flow of language, simplicity of style and melody of verse and he outstrips him in qasidas.

Zouq is one of the brightest stars in the galaxy of Urdu poets and is one of the greatest and sweetest singers of lyric verse in the Urdu language.

Zouq's pupil.

Zouq had many hundreds of poets as pupils the chief amongst them were: Mirza Dagh, Zafar, Mohammad Hussain Azad one of the greatest personalities of his age, Zaheer and Anwar. Zouq left only one son Mohammad Ismail who perished in the Mutiny as his 'spiritual sons' (verses) had done.

Zaheer died 1911 A. D.

Syed Zaheeruddin Zaheer was the son of Syed Jalaluddin Haidar who was a calligraphist in the service of Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar and his tutor in that art. Zaheer was also enrolled in the Emperor's service and received the title of Raqamuddaulah and an inkstand as a mark of royal favour. He became the pupil of Zouq in Urdu poetry at the age of fourteen. During the cataclysm of the Indian Mutiny he had to leave Delhi and he visited the petty State of Jhajhar, Sonipat, Najibabad and Bareilly. He wished to go to Lucknow but hearing of the disorders there he went to Rampur where he stayed for four years. He came back to Delhi and got a small

post in the municipality. After a short while he was appointed editor of the 'Jalwai Tur' at Bulandshahr and by his writings attracted the attention of Maharaja Sheodhayan Singh of Alwar who invited him and kept him in the State for about four years. He had to leave Alwar owing to intrigues and through the good offices of Shaifta he got an appointment in the police department of Jaipur State where he stayed for about nineteen years. After the death of Maharaja Ram Singh of Jaipur he went to Tonk at the invitation of Nawab Ahmad Ali Khan Raunaq, son of Nawab Mir Khan. After the death of Nawab Ahmad Ali Khan he was given an allowance by Nawab Ibrahim Ali Khan. He stayed for about fifteen years in Tonk. Towards the close of his life he went to Hyderabad to better his fortune and to partake of the bounties of the Nizam. After a sojourn of eight months he was received in audience but he died before he could receive a monthly stipend. When he was reduced to straitened circumstances during his stay at Hyderabad, he was helped by Maharaja Sir Kishen Prasad.

Zaheer was a prolific writer. One of his diwans entitled Gulistan-i-Sakhun was published at Agra. His second and third diwans were sold to the proprietors of Matbai Karimi Press, Bombay, and have been published. The fourth diwan is unpublished and is said to be in the possession of his family.

Zaheer was one of the most distinguished poets of his age. Although he was a pupil of Zouq he had an aptitude and partiality for the style of Momin and his ghazals show the same characteristics. He himself acknowledges this in the last line of some of his ghazals. He was one of the last lights of old Urdu poetry. He was regarded as an authority and was acknowledged as a master of Urdu poetry. His most distinguished pupil was Najamuddin Ahmad Saqib of Budaon on whom he had bestowed the title of *Pahalwan Sakhun* the champion of poetry.

Syed Shujauddin alias Umrao Mirza poetically surnamed

Anwar.

Anwar was the younger brother of Zaheer and was a pupil of Zouq in poetry. After the death of Zouq he consulted Ghalib. He was a most promising poet but he died at the age of thirty-eight in Jaipur where he had settled at the time of the Indian Mutiny. He was treated with respect and esteem by his compeers and he participated in the *mushairas* held ten years after the Mutiny at Delhi where Dagh, Zaheer, Hali, Majruh, Salik, Aziz (pupil of Ghalib), Arshad and Mashshaq read their poems. His two diwans are lost to the world but Lala Sri Ram, the talented author of the celebrated *Khumkhanai Jaweed*, has collected his scattered verses and compiled them into a diwan. Anwar combines in himself the simplicity of Zouq, the subtlety of Ghalib and loftiness and delicacy of Momin.

Ghalib (1212-1285 A. H.) 1796-1869 A. D.

One of the greatest figures in Urdu literature, the brightest star in the firmament of Urdu poetry, and the most towering genius of his age, a great thinker and a prose writer of eminence Mirza Asad Ullah Khan poetically surnamed Asad and Ghalib was born at Agra in the year 1212 A. H. (1796 A. D.) He is also known as Mirza Nausha and had the titles of Najamuddaulah, Dabir-ul-mulk, Nizam Jung conferred on him by Bahadur Shah II the last titular king of Delhi. Ghalib had a great and legitimate pride in the nobility of his birth and there are numerous allusions in Urdu and Persian prose and poetry to his princely ancestry. He was sprung from a noble Central Asian family of Turks of the Aibak clan which traced its descent through the Saljuk kings to Faridun in the misty and legendary past. His grandfather was the first member of his family to migrate to India to take up service in the army of Shah Alam II. His father Mirza Abdulla Khan had a chequered career having served the Nawab of Oudh and the Nizam of Hyderabad and finally the Rajah of Alwar. He lost his life in 1217 A. H. in an attack on the fort of a recalcitrant chief subordinate of the Rajah of Alwar. Mirza Abdullah was married to a daughter of Khwaja Ghulam Hussain Khan, a commandant in the army and a respectable citizen of Agra. The care of Ghalib devolved upon his uncle Mirza Nasarullah Khan a Risaldar in the British army who held a jagir or fief from the British, but who soon died in 1221 A. H. when Ghalib was only 9 years of age. He was brought up by his mother's family but he continued to receive a pension from the British in lieu of the *Jagir* of his uncle. Ghalib spent his early childhood in Agra where he received education from Sheikh Muazzim a famous tutor and it is said, also from Mian Nazir the celebrated poet and tutor of Agra. When he was only 14 years of age he came in contact with a scholar of great learning, Hurmuzd, a Persian by descent and a great traveller who knew the living language of Persia and Arabia. Hurmuzd who changed his name on his conversion to Islam stayed with Ghalib for [illegible] years at Delhi and Agra and encouraged him in his studies in Persian for which he had a natural aptitude. Hurmuzd's assistance enabled him to attain a wonderful mastery over the language which he displayed later on in his life.

Ghalib first visited Delhi in 1216 A. H. as his uncle was married in the family of Nawab Fakhruddaulah and Ghalib himself was married to the daughter of Nawab Ilahi Bakhsh Khan, poetically surnamed Maruf, younger brother of Nawab Fakhruddaulah of Loharu, in the year 1225 A. H. when he was only 13. The atmosphere of Delhi was surcharged with poetry and the various poetical assemblies which were the order

of the day and his contact with a poet as a father-in-law must have given him an early and a powerful impetus to compose verses. He at first affected the Persian language and wrote copiously in it, but gradually the popularity of Urdu and a natural desire to distinguish himself amongst his compeers led him to compose in Urdu. Ghalib undertook a journey to Calcutta in 1830 A. D. in the connection with pension given in lieu of the Jagir of his uncle but he was unsuccessful despite his stay of two years there and his appeal to the Privy Council in England.

Ghalib also visited Lucknow and Benares *en route*, and wrote a prose panegyric in praise of the minister of the King of Oudh and a qasida in praise of Nasiruddin Haidar. Wajid Ali Shah, in recognition of his talents, bestowed on him a pension of Rs. 500 a year but it was stopped on the annexation of Oudh after a lapse of two years. In 1264 A. H. (1847 A. D.) Ghalib suffered an imprisonment for three months in connection with gambling, owing to the rancorous hostility of the kotwal or Inspector of Police but he was treated with respect and consideration. In 1842 A. D. Ghalib was a candidate for the new post of a Professor of Persian in the recently founded Delhi College but as due honours were not shown to him when he was called for the interview by Mr. Thomson, the Secretary to the Government of India, he declined the offer. In 1266 A. H. (1849 A. D.) Bahadur Shah II conferred on him the titles of Najmuddaulah, Dabir-ul-mulk, Nizam Jung in a Durbar and commissioned him to write a history of the line of Taimur on a salary of Rupees fifty per mensem. In 1271 A. H. Ghalib was appointed a Ustad (teacher) of the king on the death of Zouq and had to correct his verses. During the Mutiny he came under a cloud because of his intimacy with the king and his connection with the court. His pension was stopped and he was subjected to various inquiries. He however cleared himself and succeeded in dispelling all the ugly rumours and doubts that had gathered round him. His pension was restored and the *izzat* and dignity accorded to him before the Mutiny, were continued. Ghalib was also appointed *Ustad* of Nawab Usuf Ali Khan of Rampur who bestowed on him a pension of Rs. 100 per month which was continued to him throughout his life. Mirza Ghalib died in 1285 A. H. corresponding to 15th February 1869 at the ripe age of 73 years 4 months and was buried at Delhi.

Ghalib: the man.

Ghalib was extremely courteous and genial and had a host of friends and admirers. He was always a regular and prompt correspondent and corrected the verses of his pupil and replied to the letters of his friends with unfailing punctuality to the last day of his life. He was possessed of broad sympathies and was a man of extremely tender, loving and lovable nature,

as is revealed by his letters and verses. He transcended the prejudices of religion and rose superior to bigotry and fanaticism. He was in fact a latitudinarian caring neither for the creeds of the various Islamic sects nor for the so-called infidelity of the Hindus. His best friends and pupils were amongst the Hindus the most notable of them being Munshi Hargopal Tufta, a remarkable writer of Persian verse. Although not always in affluent circumstances his purse was at the disposal of his friends and he was always generous to the needy. Coupled with his liberality, his conduct was characterized by frankness and candour. He never belittled his own delinquencies and gave a free expression to them. He was a moderate drinker but he never concealed it and wrote to his friends and in his poems apologetically and haltingly as if he were overweighed with the consciousness of his own shortcomings. With courtesy and urbanity he combined in himself the dignity and excessive self-respect and independence of character. He behaved like a noble and met the nobility on equal terms. He refused the professorship as he was not shown fitting honours. He might carry his self-respect and independence to fantastic extents but he was always humble, considerate, loving and sympathetic to his large circle of friends. His domestic life was not exceptionally bright or happy. To his wife to whom he was wedded at the age of thirteen he owed no excessive fondness but he was not unhappy. Children of his own he had none, as they all died in infancy. His only brother who became insane and lived with him died at the time of the Mutiny. Ghalib was attached to a relation of his called Arif who was a poet of great promise but his death soured Mirza's life. The evening of his life was further embittered by his bad health and numerous ailments. His life was not the life of an affluent man but it never bordered actually on starvation. He was however in straitened circumstances and felt the pinch of want keenly. No wonder that he sought solace in his moderate cups. Like Mir, Ghalib had passed through the fiery ordeal of tribulations which gave a poignancy to his verses. Ghalib, however, was never haughty and conceited but was judicious in his praise, which made it valuable. The most outstanding feature of Ghalib's character was his inexhaustible fund of humour and wit. They eased the jolts of his life and seasoned his troubles. In his darkest moments, would flash out some gleam of humour which would relieve him of pain and misery. His wit is not mordant and caustic. It is mellowed with human sympathies and is always original and apt. He is occasionally cynical but cynicism is not born of disgust. His playful humour does not spare the most sacred of the ties and many a shaft of delightful wit are aimed at his wife and his marital life which need not be taken too seriously. His memorable biography written by his devoted pupil Hali is replete with numerous anecdotes of his wit and humour.

Ghalib: the scholar.

Ghalib, as a scholar, ranks very high. He had read deeply and widely and his profound erudition evoked considerable respect and applause from contemporary scholars. In fact so much was he in love with his Persian that he not only wrote copiously in that language but wished to be judged by his Persian works. He often bewailed the fact that his attainments in that language were not adequately recognised, especially as Persian was going out of vogue in India. It is a curious trick of fate that his Urdu poetry on which he laid no store should entitle him to the highest place in the temple of fame. It was only to follow the fashion and at the instance of his friends and patrons that he wrote in Urdu. He was an omnivorous reader and had read deeply and well. Such was his powerful, retentive and alert memory that he never purchased a book but took books on hire which he returned when finished. He was an improvisatore of no mean order and could compose verses to order extempore as he did on one occasion at Calcutta to the wonder and admiration of the company. Arabic, he did not study thoroughly but knew tolerably well. He had a great command over prosody and dabbled in astrology. He had read sufism carefully and made use of its doctrines in his poems. He had no taste for history, mathematics and geometry although he has left a work on history. He had no aptitude for religious elegy or chronograms but he was a great thinker and a philosopher. His genius had many facets and he combined the learning of a scholar, with the exquisite expression of an artist.

He is the author of the following works:

(1) Ood-i-Hindi "The Indian Amber".
(2) Urdu-i-Mualla "The Royal Urdu".
(3) Kuliyat of Persian poetry and prose.
(4) Diwan-i-Urdu.
(5) Lataif-i-Ghaibi.
(6) Tegh-i-Tez.
(7) Qata-i-Burhan.
(8) Panch Ahang.
(9) Nama-i-Ghalib.
(10) Mahr-i-Nimroz.
(11) Dastambu.
(12) Subdchin.

His Persian and Urdu writings.

Ood-i-Hindi and *Urdu-i-Mualla* published in 1869 A. D. are in Urdu and contain letters written by Ghalib in his characteristic style. *Ood-i-Hindi*

also contains some exordia and prose compositions. *Lataif-i-Ghaibi* written under the pseudonym of Saif-ul-Haq, is a miscellany. *Tegh-i-Tez* in Urdu and *Nama-i-Ghalib* in Persian are the outcome of controversy that centered round the solecisms and mistakes that Mirza pointed out in his *Qata-i-Burhan* afterwards called *Durafsh Kawaiani*, of Burhan Qata which was regarded as a standard lexicon. *Panch Ahang* relates to prose composition in Persian. His bulky Kuliyat of Persian verses contains qasidas in praise of God and Mohammad and the Imams, eulogies of kings of Delhi and Oudh and Governors of British India and eminent nobles. His diwan of Persian ghazals ranks very high. *Mahr-i-Nimroz* contains in Persian an account of events from Taimur and Humayun and was commenced in 1850 A. D. at the command of Bahadur Shah II, *Dastambu* in Persian is a narrative of incidents of the mutiny in Delhi ranging from 11th May, 1857 to 1st, July, 1858 A. D. and is a valuable record of contemporary writing. *Subdchin* is a Persian book which contains two or three qasidas in Persian, some Qitas and some letters.

His controversies.

While Mirza was at Calcutta certain people found faults in his compositions and cited one Qateel as their authority. Ghalib impugned the authority of Qateel and adduced some verses in his support from diwans of Persian masters, This infuriated the opponents who were pupils of Qateel and they levelled their shafts of criticism at him and attacked him vigorously. Ghalib wrote a masnavi entitled Bad-i-Mukhalif in which he justified himself by citing further authorities and throwing oil on the disturbed waters. The second controversy relates to the mistakes that he detected in the authoritative lexicon of the time, *Burhan Qata.* He wrote a book in 1276 A. H. (1862 A. D.) and called it *Qata-i-Burhan* and rechristened it *Durafsh Kawaiani* in 1277 A. H. This book shows his depth of research and scholarship. It attracted considerable attention and many people wrote counterblasts in reply. Ghalib met the objections of one Mirza Ahmad Beg of Calcutta embodied in a book called *Mawaid-ul-Burhan*, by writing a book called *Tegh-i-Tez*, and the objections of Hafiz Abdul Rahim in *Qata-i-Burhan* by writing *Nama-i-Ghalib.*

His position as a Persian poet and prose-writer.

Ghalib's position as a Persian poet need not be considered here. It must, however, be mentioned that he is regarded as a master of prose and poetry in Persian literature and his name is associated with some of the greatest literateurs of India in the Persian language—Khusru, Faizi, Naziri, Bedil and Hazin.

The three stages of Ghalib's art.

Ghalib's art may be considered in three periods which mark the development of his genius and which have different characteristics of their own. It must be stated and accentuated at the outset that Ghalib did not want to be judged by his Urdu Diwan which he calls 'colourless' and took legitimate pride in his Persian works which alone he thought would enhance his reputation. His soaring genius, his lofty thoughts and his keen intellect left their impress on Urdu verse and the short diwan of 1800 lines is one of the most cherished and highly esteemed treasures of Urdu Literature. The first stage which may roughly be taken to extend from his childhood when 'he lisped in numbers' to about 25 years of age when he expunged from his big Urdu diwan all obscure and Persianised couplets. This Urdu diwan which had been relegated to the limbo of oblivion has been found out and published and affords many opportunities of judging his early efforts and tracing the gradual development in his art when he discarded the heavy yoke of Persianised constructions and the tyranny of hairbreadth subtleties of thought worthy of European schoolmen, the *cyni sectors,* of the middle ages. The early period is marked by fond and excessive imitation of Persian poets of the Naqshbandi school, its greatest exponent being Bedil. Not satisfied with a simple expression of simple and great truths, the school tried to gain distinction by indulging in lofty flights of fancy and fine subtleties of thought without much meaning and with little effect. They were frequently charged with digging a mountain to find a mole. Ghalib very naturally took to this style, for the aristocracy of his temperament required him to be distinctive, and saturated as he was with Persian modes of thought, and familiar as his tongue was with Persian ways of expression, he found it congenial and comparatively easy to write in that style. It furnished an outlet for his high ideas. His scholarship proved of great assistance. It is clear that Bedil predominated over him for not only did he imitate him but frequently paid him homage by directly alluding to him in his verses. Such an influence, pernicious as it was, lasted not very long and Ghalib recovered from his infatuation. He not only cast Bedil out completely but even purged his work of the odes written in his style. These early efforts are distinguished by quaint similes, sublime flights of thoughts often verging into obscurity, Persianized constructions and unfamiliar and uncouth words which smothered fluency and elegance. There is no effect, no deep probings of human nature such as are found in his later compositions, no firmness of grasp. The touch is uncertain and the style is crude and immature. These strings of long winded Persian constructions with only a slight sprinkling of Urdu words could only be called Urdu

verses by courtesy. Some of these discarded verses were so highly Persianized that by a mere change of a word or two Ghalib incorporated them in his Persian Diwan. These early efforts which were much ridiculed, show glimmerings of the towering and incisive intellect and the promise of a great poet and thinker. The essence of Ghalib's poetry is distinctive and the bent of his mind in early days indicates the lines of improvement in later years. In the crudities of expression and the lofty flights of thoughts of these early compositions are discerned treasures of new ideas and beautiful imageries, which were presented in a new and attractive garb. The hostile criticisms of his opponents, the burlesque and ludicrous imitations of his style the sober advice of his esteemed friends such as Maulana Fazl Haq Khairabadi, Mufti Sadruddin Azurda and Hakim Agha Jan Aish and his own acute and discerning intellect dispelled the illusion. He had outgrown Bedil's influence. In the second stage the futile subtleties divorced from facts no longer attracted and domineered him. There was more refinement of language, there was greater command over the vocabulary, there was a closer restraint in the use of Persianised constructions and idioms. The chrysalis stage had passed but the modes of thought and the love of old, difficult and Persianised constructions still clung. But such use does not offend good taste. It is admirable and thought-provoking. Such verses could be comprehended after a little battling with them but the delight born of such an encounter is thrilling. The very effort engenders joy. The last stage of improvement is the cream of Ghalib's art. It is the quintessence of poetry. Some of his verses are wonderful examples of condensation in elegant language. These odes combine purity of language with dignity of thought and rare beauty of expression. The verses are terse and compact, simple, elegant and flowing, pregnant with thought, subtle, delicate and original. It is these verses which place Ghalib in the forefront of Urdu poets.

Ghalib's claim to greatness, 1. His originality.

One of the claims of Ghalib to greatness is his originality—originality in thought, expression, similes, metaphors, imageries, vocabulary and constructions. Even commonplace thoughts are invested with a charm which make them look new. Ordinary incidents are presented in a light in which they had never been viewed before. For his new thoughts he seeks new modes of expression. The strikingly original manner in which he writes lifts the ordinary theme from the commonplace. His love of the novel and original with his power of condensation leads him to paradoxes which he uses with singular effect. Ghalib also makes a departure from the ordinary practice of Urdu and Persian poets by making words follow thought instead of

thoughts following words which is an artificial way of versification and which is responsible for the tons of insipid and colourless stuff with which the diwans of poets abound. His verses are no efforts at rhyming but are thought-packed.

His allusive style.

Closely allied to this, is his allusive style and suggestive nature of his poetry. 'He strikes the key-note and leaves the reader to make out the melody. He does not play for passive listeners.' He does not revel in full descriptions. As has been mentioned above the essence of his poetry is distinction. The whole tenor of his life proves the aristocracy of his intellect and his remoteness from commonplace modes of thought and habits. He changed his *mom de plume* when he found that a middling poet was using it and his verses were being confounded with his; he was distinctive in his dress, behaviour and speech. His letters show that he abhorred the vulgar and the commonplace. His early style flows out from the same source and is dominated by the same ideas. Ghalib's poetry is 'caviare to the general' for it is thought-packed 'fancies that broke through language and escaped.'

Ghalib : a poet of self-introspection.

Ghalib is essentially a poet of self-introspection. 'He sings of life and all the phases of life.' He fully opens his heart to his readers and sings of the tragedies of his own life, his dimmed grandeur 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, his illusive and ever receding hopes, his galling poverty, his unavailing efforts, his scepticism occasionally relieved by a buoyant faith in the goodness and justness of Providence, the thousand and one attachments and affections of life, its pomp and circumstance, its joys and its vexation. His verses are subtle records of his various and varying moods now of jubilation and exaltation, now of gloom and despair.

4. Ghalib : a great thinker and a philosopher.

Ghalib is eminently a great thinker and his verses are full of deep philosophic truths expressed with remarkable facility in philosophic language. He is a mystic and a transcendentalist rising superior to the prejudices of sects and creeds. He says: 'I am a worshipper of one God, my religion is the renunciation of creeds. When creeds are extinct, they become ingredients of true faith.' He not only preaches but practises and his life was one beautiful example of freedom from sectarian or religious intolerance. His ideals of worship are very high. He says : 'He whom I worship lives beyond the bounds of comprehension. To the seeing eye, the temple of worship (Qaaba) is only a symbol of the real temple'. Ghalib repudiates the pleasure garden view of paradise and the glowing pictures of

the gratification of sense, as humiliating and demoralising to the purity of high ideals. He writes : 'We know what paradise is in reality but oh Ghalib ! it is a fine idea to keep one's heart happy !' and again 'True worship is not evoked by the thought of wine and honey. Hurl down such a paradise into hell'. Ghalib believed that the supreme misfortune, the real tragedy of life is individual self-consciousness because it sunders the individual from the cosmic consciousness. Far happier he would have been, he says, in a vein of touching pathos, if he had not been torn away from his God and caught up in the trammels of narrow individuality. He complains, 'when I was nothing I was God, and if I had not been anything I would have been God. I have been ruined by having been (a separate individuality), what I would have been if I had not existed at all ! (I would have been God).' As a mystic Ghalib transcends the trivialities of vexations and joys and sings serenely from his elevated plane. 'In dream my imagination was doing 'commerce' with thee (the world) when my eyes were opened I found that I had neither any losses nor any gains'. How beautifully he illustrates the truth that the sensible phenomena are a manifestation of the life force yet they are not the life force itself. As Bergson says 'the life force is immanent in the forms and yet transcends them'. Says he, 'we look upon everything as God and very easily imagine that we see God in everything. But that God is beyond all comprehension. And our case is like that of the people who imagine themselves awake in their dreams ; whereas the fact is that they are still fast asleep.'

5. Emotionalism in the poetry of Ghalib.

Ghalib's poetry apart from its philosophic truths is full of concentrated emotion. The intense pathos of life, the heart-rending anguish of helpless suffering, the blank bewilderment of unbearable misery, the stern and inexorable shocks of sudden misfortune, the painful consciousness, in short that "life is a sad funeral procession with the laughter of the Gods in the background" —all this finds an echo in his verses. He says, 'The bond of existence and the bond of sorrow are in reality the same. How can man become free from the fitful fever of life before he dies'. And again, 'Yes Sorrow is soul-corroding but how can I escape so long as I have a heart. If I did not suffer from the stings of love there would be the stings of fortune'. And once more, 'Oh Asad ! how can anything except death cure the pain of life. The candle has to burn on anyhow, till the dawn.'

'Ghalib shared the child's egoism and the nervous sensitiveness of his contemporary Shelley. He cannot understand why he should not be let alone and have his own way and he cries

out ' After all I have a heart of flesh and blood. It is not a stone or a brick-a-bat, why then should it not be moved by sorrow'. Yes I shall weep a thousand times, why at all should anybody oppress me. The child cannot understand why he should get pain. The concentrated passion, the unreasoning simple fond hopefulness, the pathetic clinging to fast vanishing faith, the dread of impending calamity but not the full consciousness of it are beautifully mirrored in the couplet in which he says, 'Ah friend! Why are you so nervous in telling me of the disaster in the garden. Why should it be my nest on which the lightning fell yesterday?'

The verses of Ghalib bear the imprint of his suffering. In his verses he proclaims the divinity of suffering and the baptism of tears that makes sin itself divine. Of the intense humility and lowliness of heart born of sincere repentance and a sense of utter insignificance there is a remarkable example in the couplet, 'I sold myself to the world for nothing. But when I pondered over my worthlessness, I found that even this (nothing) was too high a price.'

His humour.

The tragic gloom of Ghalib's odes is occasionally relieved by rays of dazzling light. The sunshine and joy are interspersed with despair and darkness. His poems are lit up with a humour subtle and delicate like the bloom on a flower. It is not broad or coarse but is mellowed to suit the most fastidious taste.

Some of his verses are the concentrated essence of poetry. Their simplicity hides depths not easily fathomed, like the transparent clearness of a deep river. 'Beyond every image, every ostensible thought of his, there are vistas and backgrounds of other thoughts dimly vanishing with glimmers in them here and there, into the depths of final enigmas of life and soul'.

Ghalib, the artist.

Ghalib is a consummate artist and has an astonishing power and felicity of presentation of the visual picture. 'Ah! Love, the joy of night, the pride of heart, the peace of sweet sleep, belong to him over whose arms thy locks are gently waving'. And again, 'Ghalib! my eyes have been closed in sleep (of death) by the efforts of keeping them open. Alack! they have now brought the beloved to the bedside but at what an hour'.

Ghalib's great power of condensation.

Ghalib has great power of condensation. Some of his verses are models of brevity and suggestiveness. Here is a couplet. 'It reminds me of the number of sore spots in my heart owing to longings unfulfilled. Do not therefore ask me Oh God! to render an account of the sins committed by me'. The verse

is full of pathos and has that haunting quality which characterizes true poetry. 'It makes a pretty reference to the numerous sins committed in life but it also alludes to the heroic struggles of feeble humanity against alluring temptations. It has also a subtle meaning for a bold and straightforward sinner who audaciously tells God that the number of sins committed is very small but the longings of committing sins for which he found no opportunities is still greater and these have left some spots in heart and thus makes a pretty allusion to the fact that sins are committed not only in act but also in thought.'

Ghalib compared with his contemporaries and Browning.

Ghalib is superior to his contemporary Zauq and Momin in thought, in philosophy of life and in genius but is inferior to Zauq and superior to Momin in simplicity of style and beauty and flow of language. He can be compared to Browning as a philosophical poet. 'Browning's genius lies in what Professor Saintsbury has called the dissection of a soul. Ghalib's genius does not so much dissect as probe into the mystery of life. He sees truth by flashes. His poetry does not consist of long drawn-out reflections and sustained thinking out of sudden yet sure revelations of mystic glimpses. He is a metaphysical Browning. Ghalib also differs from Browning in that he has none of the latter's ruggedness and grotesqueness.' He may resemble Heine in his themes of despair and gloom but he can more aptly and justly be called the Goethe of Urdu Literature.

Ghalib as a mystic.

Ghalib joined to the keen intellect of the philosopher and the transcendental vision of the mystic, the exquisite expression of the artist. His art is truly superb and yet superbly true. Once again beauty is truth and truth beauty. To Ghalib had been given in an unusual degree "the vision of the faculty divine", and it is no crude enthusiasm to say that he was a great mystic. With him mysticism was not an amateur pursuit but a realization and in his poetry there is an accent of conviction, a stamp of sincerity which raises it to the level of the most impassioned utterances in the literature of the world.*

Ghalib's pupils.

Ghalib left a host of pupils chief amongst whom are Nawab Ziauddin Nayyar and Rakhsgan, Majruh, Salik, Hali his biographer, Zaki, Nawab Alaud-din Khan Alvi, Munshi Har Gopal Tufta, Aziz, Mashshaq and Jauhar. A few are noticed below.

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*I am indebted to Raghupati Sahai's valuable article on Ghalib in the East and West for the philosophy of Ghalib. I have also consulted with profit the articles of M. Khuda Bux and Abdul Qadir on Ghalib in the *Hindustan Review.*

Mir Mahdi Majruh, son of Mir Hussain Figar, was a distinguished and dearly beloved pupil of Ghalib and a resident of Delhi. He had to leave it during the Indian Mutiny and take refuge in Panipat. When the storm blew over and things once more settled down to their normal level he came back to Delhi and took part in the *mushairas*. He went out in search of livelihood and spent some time at Alwar where he was a pensioner of Maharaja Sheo Dhyan Singh. Towards the evening of his life Nawab Hamid Ali Khan of Rampur made him an allowance and he passed his days in peace. In 1316 A. H. he published his diwan entitled *Mazhar-i-Muani*.

Majruh: died 1902 A. D.

Majruh writes fluently in chaste and simple language. He elects to write on short metres in which he shines best. There is no freshness of thought but his style is masterly and his verses are faultless. Hali praised him. He was one of the last exponents of old Urdu poetry and carried on the traditions of the old poets in a befitting manner. Ghalib addressed to him many letters.

Mirza Qurban Ali Salik was the son of Nawab Mirza Alam Beg. He was born at Hyderabad, some say at Delhi. He received his education at Delhi. At first he adopted the pen-name of Qurban and consulted Momin but after Momin's death he became the pupil of Ghalib and chose Salik as his takhallus. At the time of the Mutiny he left Delhi and sought refuge at Alwar where he began to practise as a Vakil and stayed for a few years there. He went back to Hyderabad where he became a *sireshtadar* in the education department of the State. He also edited a Urdu magazine called *Makhzan-ul-Fawaid* under the patronage of Nawab Umudat-ul-Mulk. His diwan is entitled *Hinjar-i-Salik*. He died in 1291 A. H. in Hyderabad.

Salik: died 1893 A. D.

Salik was a distinguished pupil of Ghalib. His verses are remarkable for loftiness of thought and flow of language but there is no freshness. His ode on the devastation of Delhi and his elegy on the death of his poetical master Ghalib are poignant.

Nawab Syed Mohammad Zakaria Khan Rizvi, poetically surnamed Zaki, came of a distinguished and noble family and was born at Delhi in 1839 A. D. His father Nawab Syed Mohammad Khan and his maternal grandfather Nawab Azamuddaulah Mir Mohammad Khan Muazzam Jung Sarur were poets and authors of diwans, the latter having also written a *tazkira* of Urdu poets. Zaki received his education at Delhi and was deeply learned in Urdu, Persian and Arabic. He had also some knowledge of medicine, law, *tassawaf* (sufism), astrology, music and calligraphy. He had

Zaki: 1839 A. D. to 1903 A. D.

eminent teachers amongst whom were Moulana Sahbai and Pandit Ram Kishore Bismal.

In poetry Zaki was the pupil of Ghalib with whom he had long family connections. Ghalib had a regard for him, treated him with distinction and gave him a certificate a copy of which is found in the diwan of Zaki. He wrote copiously and took a keen part in the *mushairas*. He gave an impetus to Urdu poetry wherever he went. He was an apt pupil of his poetical master and many of the characteristics of Ghalib are found in his verses. He was a master of prosody and the outstanding qualities of his verses are subtlety of thought and flight of imagination. His verses, however, lack poignancy.

He had to leave Delhi during the mutiny like Zaheer, Anwar, Salik, Hali and others and sought government service. He retired as a Deputy Inspector of Schools in 1901 from Budaun after having visited Meerut, Gorakhpur, Bareilly and Allahabad in the course of his service. He died in 1903 A. D. in Budaun where he had settled down after his retirement.

Zaki's diwan was published during his lifetime. He commanded considerable influence in poetical circles and was regarded as a creditable exponent of the old school of Urdu poetry. He left behind him many pupils, the most famous being Syed Ahmad author of *Farhang Asafia* and Pandit Jawahar Nath Kaul Saqi.

Rakhshan: died 1883 A. D.

Nawab Ziyauddin Khan was the younger son of Nawab Ahmad Bakhsh Khan. He styled himself Rakhshan in Urdu and Nayyar in Persian poetry. The jagir of Loharu was assigned by Nawab Ahmed Khan to his younger sons and it was managed by Nawab Aminuddin Khan. Besides being related to Ghalib he was also his pupil and was regarded as his first Khalifa or 'adjutant.' He had a great reputation as a critic and was an important personage in the literary circles of that period by reason of his high position and great learning. He was well versed in history and he helped Elliot in the compilation of his monumental work.

His son was Nawab Shahabuddin Khan who had the poetical surname of Saqib. He was a nephew of Ghalib by marriage and also his pupil in poetry. He wrote poetry in Urdu and Persian but died very young in 1869 A. D. at the age of twenty-nine. He was a poet of great promise.

Nawab Mirza Saiduddin Ahmad Khan with the *nom de poete* of Talib was also the son of Nawab Ziyauddin Ahmad Khan and was born in 1852 A. D. He consulted his elder brother Saqib and also showed his verses after Saqib's death to Majruh, Salik and Hali. After serving as an honorary magistrate he was appointed an extra-assistant commissioner in the Punjab in 1879 A. D.

He resigned the post in 1885 A. D. owing to the death of his father.

Mirza Shujauddin Ahmad Khan, poetically surnamed Taban, was the son of Nawab Shahabuddin Khan Saqib and the pupil of Shadan and Dagh. He is the author of two diwans. He is married to the daughter of Mirza Baqar Ali Khan Kamil, adopted son of Ghalib, and is a pensioner of the Nizam. He is a poet of no outstanding merit.

Another notable member of this distinguished family is Nawab Mirza Sirajuddin Ahmad Khan Sail, son of Nawab Shahabuddin Ahmad Khan, the elder son of Nawab Ziyauddin Ahmad Khan. He is one of the most creditable pupils of Dagh and one of the foremost poets of the age.

Azurda : 1204 A. H. —1285 A. H.

Moulvi Mufti Sadruddin Khan Azurda, son of Moulvi Lutfullah Kashmiri, was the most dominating personality of that age. He occupied a most conspicuous place in the society of that period. Moulana Shah Abdul Aziz and Moulvi Fazal Imam were his teachers. He held the office of Sadar-us-sudur, the highest post then opened to Indians. He was a very learned man and was a master of Arabic, Persian and Urdu. So great was his reputation that he was selected as a tutor of Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan of Rampur and Nawab Siddiq Hassan Khan of Bhopal. Sir Syed Ahmad was also his pupil and speaks of him with great reverence. Such was his love of learning that he used to coach advanced students after his court work. He commanded considerable influence by reason of his great learning and ability, high position, nobility of character and generosity of heart. He was a most prominent man of his time and Momin, Ghalib, Zauq, Sahbai, Shaifta and Rakhshan were his friends. During the Mutiny he became involved in trouble and lost half of his *jagir*.

Azurda used to compose verses in Arabic, Persian and Urdu with great ease. He showed his Urdu verses to Shah Naseer and then to Mujrim Akbarabadi and finally became the pupil of Mir Mamnun. His verses are neat, simple and effective but they were never collected into a diwan. He is also the author of a *tazkira* of Urdu poets which is not extant. He is, however, remarkable not for his verses and *tazkira* but for his great influence. He died in Delhi in 1868 A. D.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE COURTS OF RAMPUR AND HYDERABAD

THE AGE OF AMIR AND DAGH

The exodus of poets from Delhi and Lucknow after the Indian Mutiny.

On the annexation of Oudh and the exile of Wajid Ali Shah in 1856 A. D. and the Indian Mutiny of 1857 A. D. with the deportation of Zafar, the last titular king of Delhi, the last strongholds of Urdu poetry Delhi and Lucknow ceased to have any attraction for Urdu poets who began to cast longing eyes on the small principality of Rampur.

Mutia Burj Calcutta.

Some of the poets of Lucknow who used to revolve round Wajid Ali Shah accompanied him to Calcutta and some followed him when the storm of 1857 had blown over. The seven principal poets at Mutia Burj where Wajid Ali Shah had encamped at Calcutta were named *saba saiyara* (seven stars) by him and were given long titles and honorific names. Indeed Wajid Ali Shah was a past master in the art of inventing new and attractive titles which he lavishly bestowed on all those with whom he was pleased. Regular *mushairas* were held at Mutia Burj and the glories of Lucknow were revived on a minor scale. Chief amongst the poets which formed the constellation at Mutia Burj were: Fatah-ud-daulah Bakhshi-ul-mulk Barq (q. v.); Mahtab-ud-daulah Kaukab-ul-mulk Sitarai Jang Darakhshan (q. v.); Malak-ud-daulah Saulat, Gulshan-ud-daulah Haji Mirza Ali Bahar, son of Haji Ali Beg and a pupil of Rashk; Aish and Muzaffar Ali Hunar who was a pupil of Saba in ghazal and of Dabir in marsia and who was the *ustad* of Mukhaddrah Azma Nawab Badshah Mahal poetically entitled Alam and Nawab Mahbub Alam Saheba who were masters of diwan and were wives of Wajid Ali Shah. Dagh and Nazm Tabatai also participated in the mushairas of Mutia Burj which gave great impetus to the development of Urdu poetry in Bengal. The most eminent of the local poets was Moulvi Abdul Ghaffor Khan Khaldi with the pseudonym of Nassakh who was a deputy collector of Raj Shahi and who is the author of many works. He wrote *Sakhun-i-Shaura* in 1291 A. H. It is a tazkirah of some merit of Urdu poets in the conventional style. Nassakh was a critic of ability and his criticisms of Dabir and Anis though not always fair are interesting and valuable. His other works are: *Daftar-i-Bemisal*, *Qita-i-Muntakhib*, *Chashma-i-Faiz*, *Shahid-i-Ishrat Marghub Dil*, *Ashaar-i-Nassakh*. *Ganj Tawarikh*, *Qand Parsi*, *Armaghan*, *Bagh-i-Fikr* etc. He had a pupil of some repute in Ansakh.

The first exodus from Delhi to Fyzabad, Lucknow, Azimabad, Murshidabad and Hyderabad.

The dispersal of the poets between 1856-1858 A. D. continued a process which had already set in as the glory of Delhi began to wane. The first exodus from Delhi was a result of the invasions of the Afghans from the North and the free-booting campaigns of Marhattas from the south. The first exodus was neither sudden nor general. It was gradual and extended over a period of fifty years or more. The devastated condition of Delhi, the dimmed glory of its kings, the insecurity of life and property, the uncertainty of livelihood, the diminished patronage at the court, and a longing for fresh fields induced the poets to forsake their homes to seek refuge and subsistence elsewhere. Farrukhabad, Fyzabad, Azimabad (Patna), Murshidabad, and Hyderabad Deccan had their share more or less in affording an asylum to the vagrant poets from Delhi. Farrukhabad and Fyzabad were nearer but Farrukhabad was much too small and the patronage was limited. Fyzabad and afterwards Lucknow where the capital had been shifted from Fyzabad, received the main stream from Delhi because of its nearness and for certain reasons which will be set forth below.

Farrukhabad.

Maharban Khan Rind, a grandee of the court of Nawab Ahmad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad, was a poet and musician of some merit. He learnt the art of poetry from Mir Soz and Mirza Sauda who stayed there with him after leaving Delhi. Sauda wrote some qasidas in his honour. The torch of poetry kept burning fitfully and the descendants of the Nawab sometimes wrote poetry themselves and kept poets on small pensions.

Azimabad.

Maharaja Shitab Rai, the governor of Bengal and Bihar, was a great patron of poets and a poet himself. His son wrote poetry under the pseudonym of Raja and consulted Mir Zayauddin Zaya, a contemporary of Sauda, who went to Azimabad after staying for a short time at Lucknow. Fighan after having visited Murshidabad and Fyzabad came to the court of Maharaja Shitab Rai at Azimabad and was treated with great consideration. Mir Mohammad Baqar Hazin a pupil of Mazhar left Delhi and found favour in the court of Nawab Saadatjang of Azimabad and died there. Urdu poetry has always flourished here and Behar has produced notable poets of great merit.

Murshidabad.

The Nawabs of Bengal and the grandees of their courts welcomed the poets from Delhi and dispensed hospitality with lavishness. Mir Soz, went first to Murshidabad. Mir Qudratullah Qudrat of Delhi, a poet of eminence, went to Murshidabad and died there in 1205 A. H. He was a contemporary of Mir and Sauda. Mirza Zahur Ali Khaliq also went there at the invitation of Nawazish Mohammad Khan Shuhab Jang at the time of Emperor Mohammad Shah. He was a

writer and reciter of marsia. The fire did not really die out at Murshidabad and Bengal produced Urdu poets of its own.

Tanda. Tanda is a place near Aonla (district Bareilly) and Rampur. Nawab Mohammad Yar Khan, poetically surnamed Amir, was a brother of Nawab Faizullah Khan of Rampur. He was a poet and a patron of poets. He invited Mir Soz and Sauda but they did not come. He then called Sheikh Qiamuddin Qaim of Chandpur, pupil of Dard and Sauda, and gave him a stipend of rupees one hundred per month and became his pupil in poetry. He entertained Mushaffi, Fidwi Lahori, Mir Mohammad Naim Parwana, Ali Shah, Ishrat and Hakim Kibr Ali. He died at Rampur in 1188 A. H.

Hyderabad. At the time of the first exodus the flow was most scanty and irregular from Delhi. The journey was long and beset with dangers. The Marhattas and Pindaris played havoc with travellers. A few venturesome spirits went there. Khwaja Ahsanullah, poetically surnamed Bayan, pupil of Mazhar, went there at the time of Asaf Jah II and died there in 1213 A. H. Shah Nasir went thrice.

Fyzabad and Lucknow. People flocked to Fyzabad not only because it was nearer to Delhi than the courts of other princes but also because they were welcomed with great warmth and cordiality. Ummat-uz-zauhra alias Bahu Begum, the wife of Nawab Shujauddaulah and mother of Nawab Asafuddaulah, was a favourite and an adopted daughter of Mohammad Shah, Emperor of Delhi. She had a great regard for the people of Delhi and all who came from Delhi were treated with kindness and generosity befitting their rank and station in life. The munificence of the Nawabs was another attraction. Nawab Asafuddaulah was married to the daughter of Khan Khana, a grandee of Delhi, and provided another tie. Poets, artists, merchants, artisans, *nautch*-girls and every class and condition of men poured in. It is said that Bahu Begam drained Delhi of half of its men. The courts of the Nizam, Tippu Sultan, Nawabs of Carnatic, Nawabs of Murshidabad, and Azimabad were far flung and no wonder that Fyzabad profited. The influx in Fyzabad was great and uninterrupted and the volume increased when Asafuddaulah moved into Lucknow which drew men both from Fyzabad and Delhi. At one time or other many poets came to Fyzabad and Lucknow. Sauda, Mir Taqi, Mir Soz, Mir Taraqqi pupil of Mir Soz, Talib Ali Khan Aishi, a pupil of Qateel, Jaafar Ali Hasrat, Baqaullah Khan Baqa, Khwaja Hasan, Mir Waliullah Muhabb, pupil of Sauda, Mir Haidar Ali Hairan, pupil of Sarup Singh Diwana, Mir Zahak, Fakhar Makin, Mir Ghulam Hussain Birashta, pupil of Mir Taqi, Zaya, Fighan, Qaim, Mushaffi, Insha, Juraat, Rangin, Qateel, Qazi Mohammad Sadiq Akhtar who came from Bengal and many other lesser lights,

came at different periods and kindled love of poetry and added lustre to the court. At first Mirza Jawan Bakht, the son and heir-apparent of Shah Alam, came to Lucknow from Delhi and after a short sojourn left for Benares. He brought numerous followers from Delhi some of whom remained at Lucknow. Mirza Sulaiman Shikoh, another son of the Emperor Shah Alam, followed his brother and became a pensioner of the Nawab Wazir at Lucknow. This generous-hearted prince had brought a large retinue and attracted many poets and other gifted people from Delhi. For all these reasons Lucknow became a glorious garden in which hundreds of nightingales warbled their sweet and enthralling notes.

The second exodus from Delhi and Lucknow to Rampur, Hyderabad and other Indian States after the Indian Mutiny.

The first blow to the Lucknow School was delivered by the annexation of Oudh and the departure of Wajid Ali Shah to Calcutta. The Indian Mutiny and its aftermath dealt another blow to the poets at Delhi and Lucknow which became storm centres and scenes of operations of the mutineers and the British. Bahadur Shah Zafar was tried, found guilty and deported. The denizens of the *Qila Mualla* which was the main stronghold of Urdu poets in Delhi dispersed seeking shelter. There was great insecurity of and positive danger to life and property. The principal place of refuge was Rampur which was midway Lucknow and Delhi and easily accessible to men residing in those cities. The rulers of Rampur were generous-hearted and liberal patrons who held the poets in esteem. Hyderabad though distant attracted many. The neighbouring states of Alwar, Jaipur, Bharatpur, Patiala, Kapurthala and Benares gathered a few of the refugees. The Mohammadan states of Tonk, Bhopal, Mongrol in Kathiawar, Maler Kotla and Bhawalpur where the rulers were also poets drew the wanderers, enrolled a number of poets as their court bards and supported those who sought their livelihood there. The principal centres however were Rampur and Hyderabad Deccan and only a short description of the literary activities in those two states can be made. Alwar with its ruler Maharaja Sheodhyan Singh gave shelter to Zaheer, Tasweer, and Tishna pupils of Zauq and Majruh and Salik pupils of Ghalib. He called Sarur the author of *Fisana-i-Ajaib*. Many went to Jaipur to seek employment—the principal poets being Zaheer and his younger brother Anwar who died there. Arshad Gorganfi visited Maler Kotla and Bhawalpur. Tonk, Mongrol and Bhopal distinguished themselves and may be noticed here very briefly.

Tonk.

The ruler of Tonk, Nawab Mohammad Ibrahim Ali Khan, was born in 1848 A. D. and succeeded to the masnad on the deposition of his father Nawab

Mohammad Ali in 1866 A. D. He was a poet and wrote under the pseudonym of Khalil. At first he was the pupil of Hafiz Syed Mohammad Hussain Bismal Khairabadi whose *ustad* was Amir Minai. At his death his younger brother Muztar Khairabadi (*supra*) became the poetical preceptor of Khalil. At his court the Nawab gathered many poets the chief amongst whom are: Zaheer; Nawab Suleiman Khan Asad a pupil of Aseer, who is the author of many diwans and who went to Tonk at the special invitation of the Nawab and has left many pupils in Tonk such as Asghar Ali Abru, Habibullah Zabt and Abdul Rahim Khan Sharf; Khwaja Syed Karamat Ali Khalish, a pupil of Dagh, who left an unpublished diwan and many pupils and died in 1904 A. D.; Kausar. The sons of the Nawab are poets and follow the traditions of their father.

Mongrol.

The very small state of Mongrol in Kathiawar became a centre of Urdu poetry through the patronage of its ruler Nawab Hussain Mian Bahadur. Some of the most famous ones of that time stayed with him. Jalal, Taslim, Dagh and Shamshad, a great Ustad of Lucknow and a distinguished pupil of Nasikh, were his guests at one time or another and enjoyed his hospitality. He used to pay a monthly salary and even remitted money to poets when they were not in Mongrol. The distance, the limited patronage and the climate deterred these distinguished men from staying long.

Bhopal.

The present ruler Her Highness Nawab Sultan Jahan Begum evinces keen practical interest in education and has made munificent donations to the Muslim University and other institutions. Many schools have sprung up in Bhopal as a result of her liberality. She is deeply read and is the author of many books. She has helped deserving men and is a liberal patron of learning and devout follower of Islam and she made a monthly contribution towards the expenses of the publication of a biography of the Prophet by Shibli Nomani. Her mother Nawab Shah Jehan Begum was a poetess of no mean order and had the poetical appellation of Shirin (which was later on changed to Tajwar) in Urdu and Shah Jehan in Persian. Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan with the *nom de poete* of Taufiq was the consort of Nawab Shah Jehan Begum. He was a learned man and a great theologian and had studied under Azurda. He is the reputed author of about one hundred and fifty books and befriended learned men and poets. He also wrote poetry in Arabic and Persian under the pen-name of Nawab. The father of Nawab Shah Jehan Begum and husband of Nawab Sikandar Begum, Nawab Jahangir Mohammad Khan wrote Urdu poetry under the title of Daulat. His diwan is published. Besides the royal family and the nobility, Bhopal

has been and is a centre of poets and Urdu poetry is patronised.

• Not only states but landed magnates who had any taste engaged Urdu poets as their companions or *Musahibs*.

Rampur and Hyderabad deserve to be treated at some length because they played an important part at the close of the era which gave birth to court poetry.

Rampur.

There were three reasons why the refugees took shelter at Rampur. It was equidistant from Delhi and Lucknow, was easily accessible and the distance was small. Secondly, the rulers were patrons of poets and *literateurs* and were liberal in their rewards and pensions. Thirdly they did not keep themselves aloof and did not treat their pensioners as their servants. They held them in high esteem, were greatly sympathetic and took care not to hurt their susceptibilities and even admitted them to terms of intimacy. The poets became their companions and the Nawab participated in their frolics. For this reason poets did not wish to leave Rampur even when they were tempted with better pay and prospects and those that left had always a secret longing for the genial court of Rampur.

Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan.

Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan, son of Nawab Mohammad Said Khan, was a great lover of art and literature and a patron of poets. Himself a poet of no mean order he wrote both in Persian and Urdu. He had the poetical appellation of Nazim in Urdu and has left a diwan. At first he consulted Momin but later on he formally enrolled himself as a pupil of Ghalib and after his death he also showed his compositions to Asir. He surrounded himself with the satellites of Zafar and Akhtar. Amongst the *literati* the most famous were Moulana Fazal Haq Khairabadi, Mirza Nausha Ghalib, Mir Hussain Taskin, Muzaffar Ali Asir, Jalal and Amir Minai. Dagh also came from Delhi in his time. Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan by gathering poets of Delhi and Lucknow schools in his court ushered in that period of Urdu poetry which marked the beginnings of the Union of Delhi and Lucknow school and which culminated at the time of his son Nawab Kalb Ali Khan.

Nawab Kalb Ali Khan 1250 A. H.—1304 A. H. (1835 A. D.—1871 A. D.)

The death of Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan did not retard the activities of the poets who found a still more liberal and munificent patron in Nawab Mohammad Kalb Ali Khan who succeeded his father in 1865 A. D. Unlike Frederic the Great, the Nawab was exceedingly generous to the *literateurs* of his court. His reign was the halcyon period for the court

singers. He lived in a poetic atmosphere surrounded by the leading poets of the age. Not only was Rampur an asylum for poets but it attracted men of eminence in other directions. It became a brilliant centre of illustrious poets, famous physician, eminent prose writers, renowned calligraphists, distinguished *literateurs*, noted *Chiefs*, accomplished chobdars and skilled *Rakabdars*. Amongst the literary men the most famous were Abdul Haq Khairabadi, Abdul Haq Muhandis (mathematician) Moulana Irshad Husain, Syed Hasan Shah Muhaddas (juris consult) and Mufti Saadullah. The most celebrated Hakims were: Hakim Mohammad Ibrahim, Hakim Ali Hussain, Hakim Abdul Ali and Hakim Husain Raza. But the galaxy of poets was most resplendent. There had never been such a splendid array and a brilliant throng of poets in one court. Only the most important ones can be mentioned here. Asir, Amir, Dagh, Jalal, Tasleem, Bahr, Munir, Qalaq, Uruj, Haya, Jan Saheb, Agha Hijv pupl of Atish, Uns pupil of Nasikh, Shaghil, Shadan, Ghani, Zaya, Mansur, Khwaja Bashir and Raza. The name of minor poets is legion. The favourite poets were lodged in a magnificent structure at Rampur called the Musahib Manzal. The Nawab was a wise and a tactful man. Except Amir Abdul Haq and Irshad Husain none received a salary exceeding rupees hundred. The pensioners were no encumbrance to the state. They held offices suitable to their attainments and age and thus made themselves useful to the state. But the Nawab was most sympathetic and showed personal concern in the affairs of the poets, cleared their debts and distributed rewards on festivals and other important occasions.

Nawab Kalb Ali Khan read the *Maaqul* and *Manqul* with Moulana Fazal Haq. At first he wrote prose—both Urdu and Persian—and composed many books, a few of them being *Bulbul-i-Naghma-i-Sanj*, *Tarana-i-Ghum*, *Qandil-i-Harem* and *Shigufa-i-Khusrauvi*. He also wrote Persian poetry and his Persian diwan is entitled *Taj Furrukhi*. Amir was his poetical preceptor and he showed his Urdu verses to him. He practised the art with diligence and succeeded in compiling four diwans which are by no means deficient in merit. They are mentioned below in their order.

1. Nasha-i-Khusrawani.
2. Dastambuzi a Khaqani.
3. Durrat-ul-Intikhab.
4. Tauqi ■ Sakhun.

Nawab Kalb Ali Khan adopted the *nom de poete* of Nawwab and wrote verses with skill and distinction. He was very fond of tracing words to their origin and greatly interested in philology

(*Lafzi Tahqiq*). He frequently encouraged discussions and himself presided at their deliberations. Bahar, Taslim, Jalal, Amir and Munir were adepts in this *Lafzi Tahqiq* and great progress was made. He abjured obsolete words and constructions and scrupulously avoided the use of incorrect words which were termed as *matrukat* (words given up either as incorrect or archaic or inelegant).

Not only was the court a resort of all the scholars and poets but it saw the fusion of the Delhi and Lucknow school of Urdu poetry—a process that commenced at the time of his father. It is a very important phase of Urdu poetry which has not received the amount of attention it deserved. The cult of Nasikh degenerated in the time of his pupils who could not maintain the high level of their Ustad. All the objectionable features were emphasised in the works of his followers, without the redeeming ones. The Lucknow School was represented in Rampur by Bhar, Munir, Qalaq, Aseer and Amir. The principal champions of the Delhi School were two: Dagh and Taslim. Dagh was a pupil of Zauq and had evolved a fascinating style of his own which partook of some of the characteristics of Juraat. His verses were poles asunder from those of the Lucknow School, and they made a universal appeal. There was a craze for them. Taslim although a resident of Lucknow belonged to Delhi by reason of his style. He was the pupil of Nasim the distinguished pupil of Momin whose tradition he carried on so gloriously in Lucknow even when the School of Nasik was at its zenith. Taslim refused to succumb to the lure of the style of Nasikh and always condemned it in scathing terms and zealously followed Nasim and Momin wherever he lived and practised his art. Momin and Ghalib stayed for a very short time and their influence was casual and fitful. Taskin a pupil of Momin had no forceful personality and left no mark on the history of the Urdu poetry of his time. The schools acted and reacted on each other. The outcome of this was most important and advantageous to the course of Urdu poetry. The artificiality and bombast of Nasikh disappeared or at least received a most staggering blow. The archaic words and constructions and incorrect expressions which were a feature of the Delhi School were given up as a result of the spirit of enquiry into the history of words. Poets reverted to the fount of true emotion and poetic diction was improved. The exponents of the Lucknow School saw the futility of the cult of Nasikh and found that the public taste had veered round to its rival school and they trimmed their sails accordingly. Dagh, as has been said, became wonderfully popular and his rivals saw that they must adapt themselves to the new style to save themselves from being left behind or from being relegated the limbo of forgotten poets

Amir who challenged the supremacy of Dagh had to bow before the popular opinion and his second diwan entitled *Sanamkhana-i-Ishq* is more or less written in the style of Dagh although it is not devoid of characteristics peculiar to himself. He also wrote two addenda to his diwans one in the style of Mir and the other in the style of Dard—both typical Delhi poets. The addenda are named *Gohar-i-Intkhab* and *Johar-i-Intkhab.* The pupils of Amir notably Rayaz, Jalil and Hafeez have gone further in this direction and their verses cannot be distinguished from those of Dagh or his pupils. Jalal a pupil of Rashk and Barq, brought up in the atmosphere of artificiality, steeped in the traditions of the school of Nasikh, forsook the Lucknow style for that of Delhi and one of his diwans is written in that style. He avowedly follows Mir. It should not be understood that Amir, Jalal and others came thoroughly under the influence of the Delhi school but it is true that they were largely affected and the emancipation of Urdu poetry from the tyranny of artificiality, sensualism and bombast of the Lucknow school was complete only when a society called the Mayyar was formed in Lucknow and its activities gave a *coup de grace* to a school which was waning in its influence and rapidly losing ground in the estimation of the people.

Nawab Hamid Ali Khan.

Nawab Hamid Ali Khan the present ruler of the state is highly cultured and a munificent patron of learning like his distinguished predecessors. He writes verses with credit and has bestowed pensions on poets and scholars. The days of old Urdu poetry were numbered because of the advent of the new spirit which has been discussed at length in a subsequent chapter. The Nawab has contributed handsomely to the various educational and useful institutions and has maintained the old traditions gloriously.

Amir (1244-1318 A. H.) (1828-1900 A. D.)

Mufti Munshi Amir Ahmad poetically surnamed Amir, son of Moulvi Karam Mohammad, was born in 1828 A. D. in Lucknow in the reign of Shah Nasir-uddin Haidar. He was closely related to the celebrated Mohammadan saint of Lucknow, Hazrat Makhdum Shah Mina whose mausoleum stands in that city and is held in much veneration. Amir studied in that well known and prosperous institution, the Feringhi Mahal College at Lucknow, and soon acquired considerable proficiency in Arabic and a remarkable knowledge of Persian. In the beginning his father taught him and one of the most learned scholars of the period Mufti Mohammad Saadullah was also his teacher. He was a spiritual disciple of Amir Shah Chishti. He also knew a little of medicine, astrology and other sciences. He showed remarkable aptitude for intellectual work and was very intelligent and industrious. He was

distinguished amongst his compeers by his considerable scholarship, sensibility, and simplicity.

Early, Amir began to court the Muses assiduously and enrolled himself as a pupil of Aseer, a distinguished *ustad* of his age. Gifted as he was with an inborn genius for poetry, aided by his thorough knowledge of Arabic and Persian, guided by his able and efficient poetical preceptor, Amir soon made a name for himself and achieved poetic fame. The whole atmosphere was charged with poetry. The rivalries of Atish and Nasikh, the poetical contests held almost daily in which veterans participated, the activities of Saba, Khalil, Rind, Sahr, the enthusiasm for religious elegy and the emulations of Dabir and Anis gave a stimulus to his genius which flowered very early and by constant practice he attained a mastery which soon attracted notice. (In 1852 A.D. his fame reached the court of Wajid Ali Shah and he was honoured by being asked to recite his compositions which were greatly appreciated.) At the command of the king of Oudh he composed two books entitled *Irshad-us-Sultan* (the Command of the King) and *Hidayat-us-Sultan* (the Orders of the King). In return, a grand *Khillat* with a princely reward was bestowed on him. This favourable reception at the court increased his fame as a poet. The annexation of Oudh however dealt a death blow to the ambitions and aspiration of the courtly circle of poets. After the Mutiny he wanted to take up Government service and was persuaded by his friends to see the Judge for the post of Sadar Amin but he gave up the idea as it proved distasteful to him. After a retirement of some time he was summoned to Rampur in 1858 A.D. by Firdaus Makan Nawab Mohammad Yusuf Ali Khan. The Nawab's munificence, liberality, appreciation and enthusiasm collected the poets of Lucknow and Delhi who were drifting aimlessly after the great cataclysm of 1857 A.D. After the death of Usuf Ali Khan in 1864 A.D. Rampur entered on a still more brilliant era of poetic activities in the reign of Nawab Kalb Ali Khan. Amir had the much coveted honour of being the poetical master of the Nawab and also held a responsible post in the administration of state. He was appointed an officer of Civil Law and was given the designation of Mufti Adalat by Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan. At Rampur Amir became a great literary and social personality and with the independence brought about by the allowance settled on him, he carried on his various poetic and scholarly activities. He remained forty-three years at Rampur with a few visits to Lucknow but he finally left for Hyderabad (Deccan) only to die. His friend and contemporary Dagh who had spent a number of years at Rampur had attracted the notice of the Nizam of Hyderabad and had gradually risen to be his poetical teacher. He invited Amir to share the bounties of the Nizam. Amir presented himself early in 1900

A. D. with an ode of welcome to the Nizam when he halted at Benares enroute to his capital on his return from Calcutta. The Nizam was pleased and asked Amir to pay a visit to Hyderabad. Amir left Rumpur in 1900 A. D. at an inauspicious hour for shortly after his arrival he fell ill and died at the ripe old age of 73 years and 10 months, after an illness of one month and nine days. (Dagh and Ratan Nath Sarshar attended him in his illness. Maharaja Sir Kishen Pershad also visited him.)

His works.

Amir was a copious writer. All that he wrote has not survived him. Some of his prose compositions and a diwan of Urdu verses were lost in the Mutiny. In 1895 A. D. his house was burnt down and many of his writings and valuable books in his collection were destroyed. The well known works are his two erotic diwans entitled the *Mirat-ul-Ghaib* and *Sanam Khana-i-Ishaq*, a diwan in *Naat* called *Khatim-un Nabin* and *Amir-ul-Lughat*, a fragment of a Urdu lexicon.

1. *Irshad-us-Sultan.*
2. *Hidayat-us-Sultan.*
3. *Ghairat-i-Baharistan* " The shame of spring" contained the ghazals which he read in *Mushairas* in the pre-Mutiny days, qasidas in praise of Wajid Ali Shah and other poems. It was the first diwan that was lost in the Mutiny.
4. *Nur-i-Tajalli.*
5. *Abr-i-Karam.* Both are masnavis written during his stay at Lucknow before the Mutiny.
6. *Zikr-i-Shah-i-Ambia*, a musaddas in praise of the Prophet celebrating his virtues and accomplishments.
7. *Subah-i-Azali* a poem on the birth of the Prophet.
8. *Sham-i-Abad*, a poem on the death of the Prophet.
9. *Lailat-ul-Qadr*, a poem on the ascension of the Prophet.
10. *Majmua-i-Wasokht*, a collection of six Wasokhts all written in 1284 A. H. as the chaonogrammatic names denote: Bang i Iztrar, Wasokht Urdu, Shikayat Ranjish, Safir Atishbar, Hasad Aghyar and Ghubar Taba. These are all published with an admirable introduction by Darai Adabia of Lucknow, under the title of Minai Sakhun.
11. *Muhammad Khatim-un-Nabin* was composed and published in 1289 A.H.

12. *Intikhab-i-Yadgar*—is a tazkira of Urdu poets of Rampur written at the order of Nawab Kalb Ali Khan in 1290 A. H. as the chronogrammatic title suggests.
13. *Khayabani Afrinish* "the flower bed of creation", a work on the nativity of the Arabian Prophet.
14. *Mirat-ul-Ghaib* "the mirror of the unseen", a diwan of Urdu ghazals and qasidas.
15. *Sanam Khana-i-Ishq*, the second erotic diwan published in 1313 A. H.
16. *Jauhur-i-Intikhab.*
17. *Gauhur-i-Intikhab* 1301 A.H. These two short collections of verses are addenda to his diwans of ghazal and are said to be written in the style of Mir and Dard.
18. Third diwan which could not be published and which contains qasidas, rubais and other poems.
19. *Surma-i-Basirat* contains a list of Arabic and Persian words which were incorrectly used in Urdu with explanation about correct use and authorities.
20. *Bahar-i-Hind* a short lexicon of Urdu words and idioms and which formed the nucleus of Amir-ul-Lughat.
21. *Amir-ul-Lughat.* Amlr was also engaged in compiling a stupendous lexicon of Urdu language which was called Amir-ul-Lughat but it was never more than begun. Two huge volumes contain the etymology and meaning of words and idioms beginning with Alif the first Urdu alphabet. His profound scholarship, his indefatigable energy and industry and his wide etymological researches are apparent from this vast undertaking. Two volumes were published. A third one was also compiled but could not be published. The work was projected to be competed in eight huge volumes. It was begun at the time of Nawab Kalb Ali Khan and had the patronage of His Honour Sir Alfred Lyall the then Lieutenant Governor of the United Provinces. It also received the support of General Azim Khan Vice-President of the Council of Regency. Interesting references are made to this dictionary in his letters.
22. His letters and his miscellaneous works in prose and poetry.

Amir was a great letter-writer. His circle of friends and pupils was very large and some of his letters which have been published

with a masterly introduction by Moulvi Ahsan Ullah Khan Saqib, his pupil, are very interesting and instructive. They reveal Amir the man and throw light on the various traits of his character. They also provide material for his biography and serve to explain knotty points about prosody and language.

Zad-ul-Amir, *Risala-i-Israr-i-Nazam* and *Munajat* are some of his prose works.

Pupils of Amir.

Amir had hundreds of pupils. A few of them may be mentioned. Nazim, Nawab, Safdar, Jah, Jalil, Rayaz, Zahid, Barham, Kausar Khairabadi, Wasim, Hairan, Muhsan Kakorvi, Shahir Machhlishahri, Abid, Raza, Dil, Qarar, Saqib, Asghar, Muztar. Sarshar, Hafiz, Ah, Akhtar, Qamar. The most notable are Rayaz, Jalil Muztar, Asghar, Hafeez.

His poetry.

Amir was not only a talented poet but an erudite scholar of vast learning and his claims to fame are manifold. His first published diwan Mirat-ul-Ghaib is uneven in merit. Some of his early attempts which are crude and colourless are dovetailed with his later productions which are better finished and of better workmanship. His early verses have all the objectionable features of the school of Nasikh—the play of words, sensualism, occasional debasement, coarse and inelegant similes and descriptions of lady's attire and toilet. There is nothing new or original but the old themes are presented occasionally in a charming style. His second diwan *Sanam Khana-i-Ishq* is after the manner of his great rival to poetical fame, Dagh and is characterized by thoughts of passionate love, flow and eloquence, and by pictures of amorous delights. His panegyrics on the Prophet are creditable performances couched in conventional style with an occasional burst of passionate eloquence and genuine enthusiasm. (He has command over various poetic forms and is an adept in the composition of quatrain, ghazal, qasida, mukhummus and musaddas.)

His style.

His verses are noted for their high thoughts, eloquence, flow, harmony and compactness. There is no interlarding of ornaments and no profusion of figures of speech. His style is distinguished for its vivacity and apt similarity of ending, sweetness, sublimity of thought, tenderness of feeling, intensity of passion and a mastery of expression. There is a fair sprinkling of sufistic ideas the life and soul of oriental poetry and didactic moralisings. Such thoughts however are not the exclusive property of one particular poet but occur again and again in the works of others. One of Amir's couplets is:

"Why go for Kaaba's pilgrimage, a foolish whim 'tis on thy part, Go seek and thou shalt find thy Love, housed in the closet of thy heart" is reminiscent of a memorable Persian verse

" Realise thyself and control thy heart which is the best pilgrimage ". The following lines beautifully depict the fleeting transience of mundane things with necessary moral :—

The conclave ends, the moths do fly
And flutter from the lamp away ;
The march is on, yet on the sky
Some fading stars do idly stray,
They too shall shortly hide their head
And soon their glory shall be shed ;
While reigns on earth such gay dismay
We sleep and dream the time away.

His themes of anguish and agony, the proverbial sufferings and tortures of the separated lover, the heartless indifference of the cruel mistress, all find adequate representation in his love lyrics. Says he with customary exaggeration

One Night of separation weighs
Like hundreds of Retribution days.

One of his couplets has immortalized itself by being quoted in one of the judgments of Justice Syed Mahmud of the Allahabad High Court being the only Urdu quotation of its kind. It expresses in an oriental way what Shakespeare wrote in *Hamlet*. " For murder, though it has no tongue will speak with most miraculous organ ".

" Now Murder cannot long lie hid, my Love, the Retribution's nigh,
Though thou wilt hush thy guilty steel, the blood shall for its vengeance cry ! "

Amir : the man.

Amir was a thorough gentleman and a perfect example of oriental politeness and courtesy. Modesty was a marked trait in his character. His was a lovable nature, sincere, sympathetic, pious, modest and simple. He never uttered an ill word nor did he write satires. He was a thorough moulvi in his habits scrupulously following all the injunctions of the Quran. His reputation as a pious and religious man stood very high and people had a great respect for his character, piety and knowledge religious as well as secular. There was no love of grandeur about him. He was always just and refused to be drawn into controversies regarding his supremacy over Dagh in the domain of letters. His relations with his great rival Dagh and his other compeers were friendly and pleasant. He was always impartial in his judgments and never showed partisanship nor became a member of a literary clique. He was affectionate and loving. He left four sons : Qamar, Arzu, Zameer and Akhtar.

His position.

It may be contended that Amir contributed nothing to the development of Urdu poetry. His services to the Urdu language have been recognized elsewhere in connection with his monumental lexicon, a colossal work which still remains unfinished. He was however a poet of great parts and talents and his verses are the delight of thousands. He ranks very high amongst modern Urdu poets and deserves a conspicuous position in the Valhallah of Urdu Literature by virtue of his great scholarship and high poetic genius.

Dagh Dehlivi 1831-1905 A. D.

Nawab Mirza Dagh was born at Delhi in 1831 A. D. His father was Nawab Shamsuddin Khan, brother of Nawab Ziauddin of Loharu, who died in 1252 A. H. when Dagh was only six or seven years of age. His mother remarried Mirza Mohammad Sultan, son and heir-apparent of Zafar, King of Delhi, and received the title of Shaukat Mahal. She went to live in the fort and Dagh accompanied her. He thus received his early education and training in "Lal Qila" under efficient masters. In 1844 A. D. he made his *debut* in the poetical assemblies held in the Fort and very soon came under the all-pervading influence of the poetry of the time. He studied Persian with Moulvi Ghayasuddin, the reputed author of the well-known Persian lexicon, and Ahmad Hussain. He learnt calligraphy, horsemanship, soldiery, and use of various arms in the Fort, the residence in Delhi of the Emperor and the heir-apparent, under various masters. He displayed an intense passion for poetry and his genius flowered very soon under the able guidance of Zauq to whom he had been introduced by the heir-apparent. His early efforts were exceedingly creditable to him and earned a tribute from the veteran poet-king Bahadur Shah Zafar. The craze for poetical contests in the Fort and outside gave an all-powerful stimulus to his poetical activities and his talents commanded a very early recognition and elevated him to a high position. Many notable poets and princes of the blood enrolled themselves as his pupils and submitted their efforts for improvement and correction. In 1856 A.D. his patron, the heir-apparent, died, and in 1857 A.D. the great Indian Mutiny convulsed the whole of Northern India which led to the dispersal of the poets from the Fort. Dagh went with his family to Rampur where he was courteously received by Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan who knew him when he was living at Delhi. Dagh was taken up as a companion of the heir-apparent Nawab Kalb Ali Khan and was made a Darogha or officer in charge of stables and of other departments of the State. Rampur became a refuge of the poets from Lucknow who all lived there. Dagh spent 24 years of his life in association with Nawab Kalb Ali Khan and was esteemed and respected by all. He was the convener of poetical assemblies held under the auspices

of the Nawab. Dagh stayed for about thirty years at Rampur and had the privilege of going on pilgrimage to Mecca in company with the Nawab. He also visited Delhi, Lucknow, Patna and Calcutta. Everywhere he was enthusiastically received and poetical assemblies were organised in his honour. He stayed for about three months at Calcutta and participated in poetical activities of that place. Glimpses of his impressions during his pleasant sojourn at Calcutta can be had in his masnavi entitled *Faryad Dagh* (The Complaint of Dagh). The death of Nawab Kalb Ali Khan in 1886 A. D. once more shattered the hopes of the court poets who were turned out as vagrants by the Council of Regency, appointed to administer during the minority of the succeeding Nawab. Dagh also left for Delhi. After a brief retirement and short peregrination he went to Hyderabad (Deccan), to seek his fortune in 1305 A. H. (1888 A. D.). During the interval he had visited Lahore, Amritsar, Kishan Kote State, Bangalore, Agra, Aligarh, Mathura, Jaipur, Mangrol State in Kathiawar and Ajmere where he found many of his pupils. He sought introduction to the Nizam, Mir Mahbub Ali Khan, through Raja Girdhari Prasad poetically surnamed Baqi. After a period of anxious waiting Dagh went back to Delhi but was summoned by Nawab Asman Jah in 1308 A. H. when he was introduced to the Nizam and attained to the honour and privilege of being the royal poetical preceptor. His career at the court of the Nizam was one of triumph and success. His salary was fixed at Rs. 450 per mensem which was increased to Rs. 1,000 and ultimately to Rs. 500 per month. He was the recipient of many bounties and presents which he duly acknowledged by laudatory poems and apt chronograms. He was at the height of his worldly prosperity. No other Urdu poet was so highly honoured or so greatly rewarded. Dagh stayed for about 18 years and enjoyed the esteem of the Nizam and his grandees. The Nizam bestowed on him the titles of Ustad-us-Sultan, Nazim Yar Jung, Dabir-ud-daulah Fasih-ul-mulk, Jahan Ustad. His stay gave a much needed stimulus to the poetical activities at Hyderabad, which had languished after the death of Nasir. Dagh scrupulously kept himself aloof from State politics and restrained himself from being dragged into cliques and parties. He was esteemed and respected by all. In 1900 A. D. Amir, his compeer at Rampur, came to Hyderabad and stayed with Dagh but he died soon after, before he could have an interview with the Nizam. Dagh died of paralysis in February, 1905 A. D., and was buried at Hyderabad.

Dagh : the man.

As a man Dagh was very genial and courteous, witty and sprightly. He was self-respecting and not given to sycophancy. He had a host of friends and admirers whom he treated with consideration and urbanity.

His relations with his contemporaries such as Jalal, Amir, Tasleem and Zahir were cordial and pleasant. No petty jealousies marred the harmony of their intercourse. He never took to satire and did not hit his opponents. He was however pushful which accounts for his rapid rise in the court of the Nizam.

Dagh : the poet.

Dagh as a poet has enjoyed wide celebrity. His reputation as a facile writer of easy, smooth and eloquent erotic verses spread like wild fire and eclipsed the fame of his contemporaries notably Amir, Jalal and Tasleem. His style made an universal appeal and attracted much notice. It made many converts and Dagh included the most distinguished poets in the category of his pupils whose number is calculated to reach 1,500. Such a distinction both in court and in public bespeaks his poetical talents.

His works.

Dagh was pre-eminently a poet of love lyrics. He has left four diwans of erotic odes entitled *Gulzar Dagh* "The Garden of Dagh"; *Aftab Dagh* "The Sun of Dagh"; *Mahtab Dagh* "The Moon of Dagh"; *Yadgar Dagh* "The Memento of Dagh." There is also *Zamima Yadgar Dagh* or a supplement to the *Yadgar Dagh*. Both the *Zamima* and *Yadgar Dagh* were published posthumously. He has left a masnavi entitled *Faryad Dagh*: a few panegyrics in praise of the Nizam and Nawabs of Rampur; a passionate dirge on the devastation of Delhi, a number of quatrains and qitas. *Gulzar Dagh* and *Aftab Dagh* were published in Rampur and embody the Ghazals composed during his stay there in the poetical contests with Amir, Tasleem and Jalal. They show the thorough care he bestowed on their tachuique. *Mahtab Dagh* and *Yadgar Dagh* are the result of poetical activities in the Deccan and are highly esteemed for their melody, flow, eloquence and *esprit*. The masnavi describes the love of Dagh for a prostitute named Munni Bai also called Hijab, a resident of Calcutta, who had come to Rampur in the fair of Benazir. The masnavi has some brilliant verses and is remarkable for its flow and elegance, but is marred by pictures of sensuality and coarse passion and is occasionally revolting to fine taste. His qasidas are not so sublime as those of the masters like Sauda and Zauq and rank inferior to those of Amir. There is no flight of fancy or high-soaring imagination. His amorous disposition peeps out in the panegyrics and he falls short of the standard laid down by the canons for qasida. There is no originality of similes which more often than not pertain to the domain of love. His quatrains partake of the same quality. They are more amatory than didactic in sentiment. His chronogrammatic verses are extremely clever and evince great workmanship.

His style.

Dagh's claims to greatness are: the wide celebrity that he enjoyed, the popularity of a certain style which he furbished and perfected and the services which he rendered to the language. Dagh is the acknowledged master of sweet, harmonious and sprightly numbers. His greatest merit is that he refrained from complicated and involved constructions, extreme Persianization, uncouth, grotesque, harsh and 'indigestible' words and artificiality. His verses are smooth, flowing and spontaneous. His diction is very choice and elegant and free from high sounding words. His use of figures of speech is admirable and extremely restrained. There is no interlarding of ornaments, no farfetched similes and metaphors, no extravagant hyperbole, no turgid expressions, no redundancy and superfluity of words. The verses are neat, compact, full of vigour and effect. They are very sprightly and vivacious in character. They are alive with flashing retorts and brilliant repartees, delightful flings at sobriety and abstemiousness, pictures of blandishments and coquetry, the tortures and agonies of distracted love, the machinations and intrigues of rival, audacious railings and bitter complaints which are piquant and give a flavour of passion making a ready appeal to the common emotions of men. The style is that of Juraat treating of human passion flavoured with that of Rind and finished with a polish of diction and elegance of idiom. His style became the craze of his age and he found imitators by hundreds. Even his formidable rival to poetic fame, Amir, took up the style and his second diwan is written *a la mode*.

His limitations.

His widespread celebrity contained seeds of decay. He has been called a poet-laureate of dancing girls and his poetry has been dubbed the poetry of licentiousness and sensuality. These are extreme views which need considerable modification. There is much that is of value in his verses. There are numerous verses that appeal to higher nature and contain noble and sublime sentiments. All is not tinsel. But it must be conceded that his verses have little originality or greatness of thought. There is no philosophy in his poem. They do not rank for any exposition of a great idea. They do not touch or very rarely do so, the philosophy of life, the philosophy of true love. His love has seldom any beauty, truth, sublimity, or refinement. The beloved of whom he sings is the *demi monde* who displays her charms to admiring gaze in the market. The kisses and embraces of which he writes are the kisses and embraces which could be purchased and paid for. Many of his verses are not fit for decorous ears. They are fit to be sung, as they are sung in the banquets of pleasure in the company of riotous boon companions, lit with wine and laughter of dancing girls. They depict surface emotions

and rarely strike a higher note. Seldom do they require an effort of imagination. They do not provoke thought or genuine imagination. The pictures are of sensual love without purity, without spirituality. There is not the real pathos or pain of Mir, or the sublimity of thought of Ghalib. figures of speech are also commonplace and outworn. There is no effort at originality. His themes as illustrated in his masnavi are frequently commonplace and his love, as shown by the love for a common prostitute in his masnavi, is sensual unlit by a higher ideal.

His position as a poet.

With all his faults, Dagh must rank high as a poet of eminence. His service to the language rendered by his avoidance of harsh, discordant and learned words, his eloquence and spontaneity and apt use of idiom his treatment of stiff themes in a sweet harmonious language, his cleverness and facility in composing piquant verses, terse, elegant and compact, his widespread celebrity, his high position as a *ustad* of many distinguished pupils all entitle him to a very conspicuous place in the ranks of Urdu poets and in fact he is the only formidable competitor of Amir for the sovereignty of the domain of modern Urdu poetry of that period.

His pupils.

The list of his pupils is very large. Some of them are: Ahsan Marharwi, Nuh Narvi, Nasim Bharatpuri, Bekhud Budaoni, Bekhud Dehlvi, Agha Dehlvi, Azad, Hairat, Bagh Sambhli, Hasan Brelvi, Bebak, Hairat, Rasa, Firoz, Ashk, Jigar Moradabadi, Dr. Iqbal, Sayil Dehlvi—the most notables being the Nizam of Hyderabad Mir Mahbub Ali Khan poetically surnamed Asaf, Iqbal, Sayil, Ahsan, Bekhud Dehlvi and Budaoni, Nuh, Nasim, Jigar and Agha.

Amir and Dagh compared and contrasted.

Amir and Dagh flourished at the same time and wrote ghazals, in the same metre, *radif* and *qafia*. Both are great ustads and masters of verse. Both had a big following and a large circle of friends and admirers. Both were equally loved for their amiability friendliness and gentleness, and respected for their poetic talents. Dagh enjoyed greater celebrity and climbed the ladder of fame and worldly prosperity to the top. Amir was not so fortunate and had not that measure of fame and ease which fell to the lot of his compeer. Dagh's appeal was universal and his ghazals are popular in the study of the learned, the banqueting halls of the riotous, in the streets and in villages. Amir was better liked by scholars and discriminating readers who were often repulsed by the superficiality and commonness of Dagh. Amir was appreciated for his noble sentiments and the perfection of verse-technique.

The difference in the style is the difference of temperaments, outlook on life and environments. Dagh was vivacious and mercurial and had been brought up in the poetic atmosphere of

Delhi. Amir was a moulvi, had been born and reared at Lucknow and had long associations with the court poetry and court poets of Wajid Ali Shah. Asar was his poetical master. Barq, Saba, Bahar, Qalaq and others were his contemporaries with whom he came in daily touch. He could not escape their influence. In fact he himself was attached to the court. He was bathed in the atmosphere of the period and it was not until he had been long in Rampur in association with Dagh that he began to shake off the baneful influence. He was thoroughly imbued with the literary traditions of Lucknow and had received his training in the cult of Nasikh as practised by his pupils. His first published diwan *Miratulghaib* envisages all the peculiarities and characteristics of that age. There are debased sentiments, coarse and elegant similes, descriptions of ladies' attire and toilette and inapt play of words but there are occasionally brilliant flashes of good poetry. The diwan also shows his grip and mastery over versification and technique. *Miratulghaib* is very uneven. Dagh's style was formed in Delhi and he has perfected his style on his own lines, basing it on that of Juraat and pupils of Atish such as Rind and Saba. Dagh's *forte* was polished language, apt use of Urdu idiom, striking repetition and manipulation of words and piquancy of ideas. He makes his verses pungent by indulging in flings at the coquetry and heartlessness of the beloved, jealousy and machinations of the rivals for the love railings at abstemiousness and piety, and simulated anger against the beloved. His verses have word music and word picture but his sentiments float on the surface. These verses caught the imagination of the people and this was the great secret of his phenomenal and tremendous success. Amir fearing to lose ground and struck with the signal success of such a style began to emulate him. It is true that he acquired a greater simplicity, flow and polish of language than before but he could not outshine Dagh and in fact was left much behind. Amir's second diwan *Sanam Khana-i-Ishq* is inferior to Dagh's *Gulzar-i-Dagh* if judged from the standpoint of Dagh's style. However it discloses wonderful effort on the part of Amir to adapt himself to a new style and the measure of success achieved is by no means mean.

Judged from the highest standpoint of poetry and lofty canons of supreme art it must be admitted that there is very little originality and less of genuine poignancy and 'divine fire' in the verses of both. But with all limitations Amir is superior to Dagh in the grandeur of words, sobriety of style and delicacy of sentiment. He is a master of verse-forms and has better command over verse-technique. He makes few or no mistakes in his versification but Dagh errs much more frequently. Amir is decidedly superior to Dagh in his qasidas. Dagh's genius did not lie that way and he lags far behind although his apologists

make extravagant claims for his powers in writing panegyrics. Dagh was essentially a ghazal-writer and he reigns supreme in his own sphere and in his own style. Amir was more versatile; a fine prose-writer and critic and was a greater scholar than Dagh. The monumental lexicon *Amir-ul-Lughat*, his letters where he explains the various intricate points about the use of words and idioms and his own verses bear eloquent testimony to his erudition and research. His qasidas rank higher than those of Dagh and are entitled to a place along with the best in the language—those of Sauda, Zauq and Mir Mamnun. Only Zahir, pupil of Zauq, has shown that brilliancy and power in the present age. Dagh scores over Amir in point of language and has greater sweetness, music, flow, simplicity, pungency and vigour. To Dagh belongs the credit of popularising Urdu verse and bringing into vogue a style which became the craze of the age and still goes strong. He revealed the beauties of simple words and dealt a heavy blow at the revolting descriptions of ladies' attire and toilets. Dagh's poetical powers were at their height when he was at Rampur but he lost his vigour and grip as his age advanced and as he acquired the goods of the world. Amir maintained his height and even showed an advance with the passage of time. Dagh was spoilt by fame, ease and prosperity as his diwans *Mahtab Dagh*, *Yadgar Dagh* and addendum to *Yadgar Dagh*, which were composed at Hyderabad show that decadence had set in. It is idle and uncritical to make a sweeping generalisation. The final arbiter is the taste and temperament of the critic.

Jalal
1250-1327 A. H.
(1884-1909 A. D.)

Hakim Syed Zamin Ali Jalal, son of Hakim Asghar Ali *Dastan-Go*, was born at Lucknow in 1250 A. H., studied Persian and Arabic in the school of the Nawab Asafuddaulah and also qualified himself for the hereditary profession of a physician. Like his compeers he took to poetry very early and abandoned his other serious studies for it. His poetic bent asserted itself and instead of being a physician he became a confirmed poet and sought introduction to Rashk through his pupil Hilal. Rashk was the most famous disciple and adjutant of Nasikh who corrected and improved most of the ghazals that were submitted to Nasikh. When Rashk left for Iraq, Jalal was entrusted to Barq. The daily poetical contests gave a stimulus to the young aspirants for fame. Jalal frequented the gathering held at the house of Qalaq where Bahr, Sahr, Aseer, Amir, Bekhud and others congregated to recite their compositions. The Mutiny of 1857 A. D. dealt a rude shock to these assemblies. The poets were awakened from their rosy dreams to stern realities and Jalal, who was a mere youth, opened a pharmacy in Lucknow in the rooms of one Bakhshi Nand Rai, a friend of his father and a poet with the pseudonym of Wiqar. This association

fostered his love for poetry and he continued to practise it strenuously. He was summoned by Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan, ruler of Rampur, where his father was a royal story-teller (*Dastan-Go*) and was received with tokens of appreciation and honour. Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan died soon after and was succeeded by Nawab Kalb Ali Khan who gave him a salary of rupees one hundred per mensem. Jalal resigned his position many times but the generous and forgiving Nawab called him back, reinstated him and paid him even for the period he was absent from Rampur. He stayed in Rampur for about 20 years and took part in poetical contests with his formidable competitors Amir, Dagh and Taslim. The odes composed by all these four afford interesting comparison and show the style of each one of them. The death of Nawab Kalb Ali Khan and the establishment of the Council of Regency led to the dispersal of the poets and Nawab Hussain Mian, ruler of Mangrol, a petty State in Kathiawar with a very limited income came forward as a patron of the vagrant poetical celebrities, and invited Jalal where he spent some time but he returned to the province of his birth. Even when Jalal had left the State Nawab Hussain Mian gave him a monthly stipend of rupees twenty-five and a reward of rupees one hundred for every qasida in his honour. Jalal devoted himself to the composition of verses and correction and improvement of those of his numerous disciples. He died in 1909 A. D. at the ripe age of 77.

His Works. Jalal has left numerous works :

1. His first erotic diwan entitled *Shahid-i-Shokh Taba.*
2. His second erotic diwan entitled *Karishmajat-i-Sakhun.*
3. His third erotic diwen entitled *Mazmunhai-i-Dilkhush.*
4. His fourth erotic diwan entitled *Nazm-i-Nigarin.*
5. *Sarmaya-i-Zaban-i-Urdu*, an exhaustive dictionary of Urdui dioms.
6. *Ifada-i-Tarikh*, an aid to the compilation of chronograms.
7. *Muntakhab-ul-Qawaid*, an exposition of the origin of Hindi words.
8. *Tanqih-ul-Lughat*, a lexicon of Urdu words.
9. *Gulshan-ul-Faiz*, another lexicon of Urdu words.
10. *Mufeed-ul-Fus'ha*, a treatise on prosody.

Besides four erotic diwans he has left treatises on the compiling of chronograms on prosody, on the determination of gender and other useful literary subjects. *Sarmaya-i-zaban-i-Urdu* (The Stock of Urdu Language) is a dictionary of Urdu idioms which is a reliable compilation and one of the first of its kind. In this work

he has systematised the principles and rules of the language. *Dastur-us-shaura* "the Practice of the Poets" is one of the first of its kind and relates to the determination of gender in Urdu language. Some of the rules formulated by him are important. *Muntakhab-ul-Qawaid* (Selection of Rules) relates to grammar and *Mufeed-ul-Fus'ha* (A Help to the Poets) is a brochure on prosody and *Ifada-i-Tarikh* (Help to Chronograms) deals with the composition of chronogrammatic verses. It would thus be seen that Jalal was a great enthusiast of the language and he carried on the traditions of his poetical preceptor Rashk who composed the famous lexicon of Urdu language. All thesebooks were rudimentary and have now been superseded by more scholarly and exhaustive works but Jalal's position as a critic and a poet is remarkable. Even in his earlier days in poetical assemblies he would put forward objections regarding grammar, prosody and language in the odes of poets and this habit clung to him throughout his life. At Rampur he was engaged in controversy with Ghalib over a particular word and incurred the displeasure of the Nawab by calling Ghayasuddin, the famous author of the Persian lexicon *Ghayas-ul-Lughat*, a 'baby preceptor'. His polemical and fault finding nature was responsible for many an argument with his contemporaries.

Jalal: the man.

As a man he was regarded as somewhat conceited and haughty. He sometimes would not participate in the assemblies for in his pride he disdained to mix even with some of the poets who would be regarded as masters. He very rarely praised. This contemptuous treatment resulted in long-drawn-out controversies and one pupil of Taslim poetically named Shauq wrote two books in which he pointed out various solecisms and mistakes of Jalal. He was however devoted to his pupils and friends and worked at the improvement and correction of their productions, a labour of love, cheerfully and industriously.

Characteristics of his poetry.

Jalal is the last representative of Lucknow school of Urdu poetry. Lacking brilliance he was content to jog along the beaten track. His voluminous diwans have no distinction or specific merit. The language is less artificial and faultless. His verses though occasionally brilliant are on the whole tame and commonplace. There is no poetic fire, no suggestion. They seldom provoke thought, and are often mechanical, conventional and occasionally positively vapid. It is true that his erotic verses are flowing and correct and do not contain those frequent and detailed descriptions of comb, hair, and other articles of toilet and women's attire which are generally associated with Lucknow school of poetry as carried on by the followers of Nasikh. His verses are however correct and free from the blemishes of involved construction and inelegant

words. In fact Jalal regarded himself as a great authority on language and prided himself on the correct use of an idiom or word. In this respect he thought himself to be superior to all his contemporaries. His fecundity was partly responsible for the poor quality of his verses. It was usual for him to correct about twenty odes of his pupils and compose two or three ghazals and a qasida every day. He and his pupils used to flood the poetical periodicals with their odes.

His position in Urdu Literature.

Jalal as a facile writer of correct verses and a critic of some note is entitled to a prominent position in the second rank of Urdu poets.

His pupils.

Jalal has left some notable pupils chief amongst whom are his son, Kamal, who resided at Rampur but who is now dead, Yas, Arzu, Ahsan Shahjehanpuri, and Sirdar Uddham Singh. Kamal, Arzu and Ahsan are the most distinguished. Kamal and Arzu dominated the literary circles of Lucknow and are regarded as *ustads*.

Arzu.

Syed Anwar Hussain of Lucknow, son of Syed Zakir Hussain poetically surnamed Yas, was like his father a pupil of Jalal. He attained great distinction and after the death of Kamal was regarded as the *Janashin* or best successor of Jalal in the art of poetry. At first he adopted Umeed as his pseudonym but now he has exchanged it for Arzu. He is a great master of prosody and practises the art of poetry in all its forms with skill and distinction. He also writes marsias and has now taken to compose dramas. Though born in Lucknow Arzu belongs to the school of Delhi by reason of his poetry. He is the best exponent of the style of Jalal which he had adopted after contact with the Delhi school. His verses are distinguished by simplicity, flow, chaste and sweet language, evenness and poetic fire. He is one of the leaders of Lucknow in the art of poetry. His diwan has not yet been published.

Ahsan.

Ahsan Ali Khan, son of Qasim Ali Khan, was born in 1274 at Ota in the district of Bareilly, Rohilkhand. His parents migrated to Shahjehanpur where he was educated. At the age of sixteen he began to compose poetry and showed his verses to Hafiz Nisar Ahmad Khan Taib. In 1880 A. D. he became a pupil of Jalal In 1884 he sought Government Service in the Settlement Department at Gorakhpur and served as supervisor Kanoongo, Munsarim, and Peshkar. In 1890 he resigned on his qualifying himself as Mukhtar and began to practise in the courts of Shahjehanpur. In 1896 A. D. he started a poetical magazine called *Guldasta-i-Armaghan* which ceased publication after a number of years. In 1893 he published his first diwan entitled *Khumkada-i-Khayal*. He has other useful publications to his credit. In 1891 he visited Mangrol

and he also visited Hyderabad. Ahsan is a clever writer of verses but there is nothing of outstanding merit. He is regarded as a talented pupil of Jalal who wrote cleverly and faultlessly. His reputation stood high in the neighbouring districts.

Taslim : 1820-1911 A. D.

The fourth pillar of Urdu poetry at the court of Rampur was Taslim, the pen-name of Ahmad Hussain *alias* Amirullah. He was born in the year 1820 A. D. at Manglesi, a village in the neighbourhood of Fyzabad. His father first lived at Bidusra near Daryabad but left his home for Fyzabad when the village was mortgaged and sold. After a short sojourn at that place the family migrated to Lucknow and sought employment in the Military Department of Nawab Mohammad Ali Shah. His father Moulvi Abdus Samad ultimately attained an officer's rank drawing the rather slender salary of rupees thirty per mensem. Taslim who had accompanied his father in early age was also enrolled as a soldier and after the retirement of his father, he was allowed to succeed to his post at the same pay, at the express request of his father.

Taslim, as was customary with youths of his age, studied Persian with his father and a tutor named Shahabuddin, and Arabic with his brother Moulvi Abdul Latif and later on with Moulvi Salaamat-ullah at Rampur. His knowledge of Persian and Arabic was profound and considerable. He was also a fine calligraphist and for his graceful and beautiful calligraphy he obtained an employment on a salary of rupees twenty in the newly established Nawal Kishore Press at Lucknow. In poetry Taslim became a pupil of Naseem and was thus proud to belong to the Delhi school of Urdu poetry. He adopted and perfected the modes of Delhi school in contradistinction with those of Lucknow, in style, in theme and in vocabulary.

After a time his regiment was disbanded and he was thrown out of employment. He however managed to get an introduction to the court of Wajid Ali Shah as a poet through his friend Captain Maqbul-ud-daulah, Ihsan-ul-mulk Mirza Mahdi Ali Khan, poetically surnamed Qabul, a poetical pupil of Nasikh. He composed panegyrics in Persian and Urdu which were of a high order and which commended themselves to the poet King who admitted him as a court poet on a salary of rupees thirty per mensem. Following the annexation of Oudh Taslim like many others repaired to Rampur to gain a livelihood. For some time he could neither secure a suitable employment nor could he gain admittance in the royal poetical circle but served private people on a miserable pittance. He contrived however to recite a laudatory composition before Nawab Kalb Ali Khan, who was then heir-apparent and thus attracted his notice. When peace was restored and the convulsion of 1857 A. D. subsided Taslim

set out from Rampur to search for his lost family from whom he had been separated at Lucknow in the troublous times. He went to Lucknow and Fyzabad and was restored to his family. After some time he was admitted into the newly established Nawal Kishore Press where his poetical preceptor Naseem had also served for some time. He received a monthly stipend of rupees ten from Nawab Mohammad Taqi Khan for correcting his verses but on his death in 1292 A. H. (1875 A. D.) he went again to Rampur at the invitation of Nawab Kalb Ali Khan on a salary of rupees thirty which was raised to rupees fifty as he rose from the posts of a Nazir and Peshkar to that of a Deputy-Inspector of Schools. On the death of Nawab Kalb Ali Khan, Taslim had to leave the State and seek his fortune at Tonk and afterwards at the outlying principality of Kathiawar-Mangrol but he did not stay there long and was called back to Rampur by Nawab Hamid Ali Khan who gave him a pension of rupees forty and he stayed there till his death in 1911 A. D. at the great age of 101 years.

His works.

Taslim was a copious writer. His earliest diwan was lost in the Mutiny. His other published diwans are :—

1. *Nazm-i-Arjmand.* This diwan was published in Lucknow and contained a few of the pre-Mutiny qasidas, his odes and two of his masnavis.
2. *Nazm-i-Dil Afroz* was written and published at Rampur.
3. *Daftar-i-Khayal* was also written and published at Rampur.

A few pages of his fourth diwan are with his pupils at Rampur. He also wrote the following masnavis :—

1. *Nala-i-Taslim.*
2. *Sham-i-Ghariban.*
3. *Subah-i-Khandan.*
4. *Dil-o-jan.*
5. *Naghma-i-Bulbul.*
6. *Shaukat-i-Shah Jahani.*
7. *Gauhur-i-Intikhab.*
8. *Tarikh Badih* or *Tarikh Rampur.*

He also wrote *Safarnama-i-Nawab Rampur*, a book of travels, comprising of about twenty-five thousand verses narrating the journey and experience of the Nawab in England.

His style.

Taslim's poems are spirited, terse, buoyant and flowing. His *metier* is masnavi and he shines best in this form of composition. He outdistanced his compeers in this branch of poetry. He also writes qasidas with vigour. His ghazals are extremely spirited and his first diwan *Nazm-i-Arjmand* is the best. The prodigality of his verses tended in his case as in most other cases to produce an effect of tameness

and monotony. Taslim is remembered principally for three reasons: firstly for the excellence of his ghazals and masnavis; secondly he is the representative of the school of poetry founded by Momin and lastly that he has the good fortune of being the poetical preceptor of that talented and brilliant poet Hasrat Mohani one of the leading poets of to-day.

Taslim: the man.

Taslim spent his life in straitened circumstances and at times he was reduced to the verge of starvation and depended on the support of his numerous poetical pupils and admirers. Life protracted was woe protracted to him. He was amiable and of a contented nature and was never subject to those fits of jealousy and envy common amongst rivals. With the death of Taslim, the last of the great poets of a previous age, the epoch may be said to close.

His pupils.

Taslim had numerous pupils: Shauq Nimvi, Hasrat Mohani, Ursh Gayawi, Haji Mohammad Ismail Khan Salar Rampuri entitled Babul-i-Taslim, Mohammad Akbar Nashtar, and others who are mentioned in *Hayat-i-Jawedani*, a life of Taslim, written by Zamiruddin Ahmad Ursh of Gaya. The most notable pupils are Hasrat and Ursh. Hasrat is dealt with later on.

Ursh.

Zamiruddin Ursh belongs to the province of Bihar. He is the son of Munshi Banda Ali, pleader of Gaya. He sought service in the Railway department after having a chequered journalistic career. At first he consulted Shamshad, pupil of Nasikh, but afterwards became a favourite pupil of Taslim. He is the author of many works mostly unpublished. He wrote a diwan called *Fikr Ursh* in the style of Dagh but did not approve of it. His second diwan *Nazm Naunigar* is in the style of Taslim and has been revised by him. He has also succeeded in writing a third diwan. Besides he has written two brochures on language and prosody and a history of Agra and Delhi which is called Bargah Sultani. For a time he edited the *Bihar Punch*. He writes ghazals and modern poems which are called 'Natural Shairi' with skill. He has distinguished himself in the new forms and has an established position by reason of his mastery and cleverness.

HYDERABAD DECCAN.

The Court of the Nizam of Hyderabad.

Hyderabad (Deccan) has carried on its traditions of learning and literature. The Nizams not only inherited the territories once occupied by the famous and enlightened kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda, the pioneers of Urdu Literature, but kept the lamp of learning alive. Hyderabad has always been, more or less, the centre of scholarship in the Deccan. It was the meeting place of poets and philosophers, both indigenous and foreign. The liberal

patronage showered by the Nizams and their nobles attracted poets, scholars, divines, theologians and jurisconsults from Northern India and such distant places as Persia, Bokhara, Samarcand and Arabia. These *alumni* freed from cares of the world by such generous liberality, devoted themselves to literature and became an ornament to the court. The Nizams were not only distinguished patrons of arts and learning but were wooers of the muses themselves. They wrote poetry and thus kept old traditions alive. The torch of knowledge though occasionally dimmed and fitful was never thoroughly extinguished. The older Nizams, in accordance with the times, practised Persian poetry but never fondly fell in love with Urdu.

Nizam-ul-mulk Asaf Jah, 1671—1748 A. D.

The founder of the dynasty in the Deccan, Mir Qamaruddin Fateh Jang Nizam-ul-mulk, Asaf Jah (born in 1671 A. D. died 1748 A. D.), was a Persian poet of distinction and has left two diwans in that language. He wrote under the poetical surnames of Shakir and Asaf and used to consult the celebrated Persian poet Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil. He was imbued with the doctrines of Sufism and is said to be an adept in the art of writing prose and poetry in many languages. He is said to have written verses in Urdu but no specimens are extant.

Nawab Mahbub Ali Khan Asaf: 1869-1911 A. D.

His Highness Nawab Mir Mahbub Ali Khan Bahadur was a Urdu poet of considerable distinction and merit. He was born on 18th August, 1866, and ascended the throne on 26th February, 1869, at a very tender age. He was educated under eminent masters Moulvi Mohammad Zaman Khan Shahid, Moulvi Masihuzzaman Khan, Moulvi Anwarullah Khan, Moulvi Ashraf Hussain Muzzaffar Hussain Khushnavis, Mirza Nasrullah Khan, Mr. Clark, Sarwar Jang, Afsar Jang and Muttin Khan, and he had attained considerable proficiency in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, English, horsemanship and musketry. He was imbued with a love for scholarship and gave great impetus to learning by his liberal patronage. Hyderabad became a resort of the scholars after their dispersal from Delhi and Lucknow and from other places. Moulana Karamat Ali, Moulana Haidar Ali, Moulana Abdul Halim of Farangi Mahal, Mohammad Hussain, Moulvi Aminuddin Khan, Moulana Mohammad Lutfullah, Moulana Wahiduzzaman Khan, Moulvi Nasih-uz-zaman Khan, Moulvi Mahdi Ali, Moulvi Mushtaq Hussain, Moulvi Syed Hussain, Moulvi Syed Ali, Moulvi Nizamuddin Hasan, Moulvi Nazir Ahmad, Moulvi Aziz Mirza, Moulvi Abdul Haq Lucknawi, Moulvi Abdul Haq Khairabadi, Moulana Abdul Haq Cawnpuri, were employed in the State at one time or other and enjoyed the favours of the Nizam. His appreciation of *Farhang Asafia*, a lexicon of Urdu language, compiled by Syed Ahmed Dehlvi was, indeed, princely. He not only encouraged the compiler by purchasing a certain

number of books but also gave him a honorarium and settled a pension of fifty rupees per mensem for life. The distinguished magnanimity spurred literary activity and many books and useful treatises were written. Such standard books as *Tamuddun-i-Arab* (Civilization of Arabia), *Sawanah-i-Umri Nawab Sir Salar Jung* (the Biography of Nawab Sir Salar Jung), *Tarikh-i-Deccan* (the History of Deccan) and numerous other books were written and published. He honoured and rewarded the *literati* of his age in truly magnificent manner. Moulana Shibli Naomani Hali, Abdul Haq the author of *Tafseer Haqqani*, Moulana Ghulam Qadir Girami, Zaheer Dehlvi, Saef-ul-Haq Adib, Qadr Bilgrami, Ratan Nath Sarshar, Sharar Lucknawi, Shahbaz have all partaken of his bounties. The poets were always held in esteem and received especial consideration. Mirza Dagh attained to the pinnacle of his glory in Hyderabad in the Nizam's Court. Never did any poet rise to such a zenith of fame and height of worldly prosperity. His monthly salary was fifteen hundred rupees besides presents, perquisites, emoluments and salaries for his relations. Amir Minai unfortunately did not live to share the Nizam's splendid hospitality but his son Akhtar Minai and his favourite pupil Jalil are enrolled as court poets and Jalil has the supreme distinction of being the ustad of the present Nawab.

Nawab Mahbub Ali Khan was poetically surnamed Asaf and belonged to the school inaugurated by his ustad Dagh. He has left two erotic diwans containing ghazals. The poems are distinguished by a marked beauty of expression and delicacy of sentiment. They are composed in the style of Dagh. There is a flow and spontaneity, eloquence and apt use of idiom, piquancy and vigour in his verses. On the whole they are charming and evince considerable literary merit.

Sir Usman Ali Khan Usman, 1911.

His son, the present ruler of Hyderabad, His Exalted Highness Sir Usman Ali Khan Bahadur, follows in the footsteps of his worthy father. He is not only a liberal patron of art and literature but is an enthusiastic poet of no mean merit and has surrounded himself with a number of distinguished poets and scholars. The foundation of Osmania University with its medium of instruction in Urdu has given the greatest impetus to the development and progress of Urdu. It has given stability and a secured position to the language and literature. The establishment of a Urdu University, the foundation of a society for the advancement of Urdu and a Department to translate books from various languages have done untold service to the cause and advancement of Urdu language and literature. He is the greatest benefactor of Urdu.

Sir Usman Ali Khan poetically surnamed Usman has published his diwan of ghazals which provides a delightful reading. He

consults Jalil in his poetical compositions. His verses are marked by a charming simplicity, neatness, vigour, spontaneity and eloquence. There is no redundancy or trace of effort. His Exalted Highness has a fair proficiency in Persian and Arabic and writes occasionally in those languages.

Maharaja Chandu Lal Shadan (1766 1845 A. D.)

Amongst the grandees and nobles of the Nizam, as patrons of poets and scholars, the most conspicuous has been Maharaja Bahadur Chandu Lal, poetically entitled Shadan, who was a peshkar (minister) of Hyderabad for a very long period. The Maharaja Bahadur is a Khattri by caste. He was noted for his scholarship, patronage and charity. His house was the asylum for the destitute and the indigent and his charity was fabulous. So famous he was that Hyderabad was called Hyderabad of Chandu Lal. His liberality attracted poets from all parts of India and Persia, and the poetical combats held every night in his palace were attended by poets from the distant North. Naseer Dehlvi frequented his assemblies many times, and returned laden with rewards. Zauq and Nasikh were invited with rich presents, but distaste for travel and love for their native soil prevented them from coming. The Maharaja was a Persian and Urdu poet of distinction, and has left two diwans in Urdu, and one in Persian. The poets in his court numbered more than three hundred. Their monthly salaries varied from one thousand to one hundred rupees. He also wrote a book entitled *Ishrat Qada Afaq* in which he narrates the incidents of his life, the history of his family and his own services in the Nizam's dominions.

Raja Girdhari Pershad Baqi (1840-1900 A. D.).

Raja Girdhari Pershad *alias* Mahbub Nawazwant Raja Bansi Bahadur was a Saksena Kayasth. He was learned in Persian and Sanskrit and had a fair knowledge of Arabic and occupied a prominent place amongst the nobles of Hyderabad. He was noted as a patron of poets and helped Dagh in the beginning of his career. He was a prolific writer and has left about 15 or 16 books amongst which are the *Bhagwat* in Persian verse ; *Kesho Nama* ; *Kuliyat Yadyar Baqi*, *Qasaid Baqi* ; *Prince Namah* ; *Kanuz-ul-Tarikh* ; *Baqa-i-Baqi* ; *Siyak Baqi*, *Pirai Uruz*, *Aina-i-Sakhun*. His verses show great tolerance in matters of religion and are replete with Sufistic doctrines. Philosophy and religion fascinated him and he led the exemplary life of a true dervish. His rubaiyats are extremely neat and elegant and rank with the best. His poems show considerable literary merit. He was the pupil of Shamsuddin Faiz.

Maharaja Sir Kishen Pershad Bahadur, retired Prime Minister of Hyderabad, is a poet and scholar of repute and distinction. He traces his descent from an ancient family of Delhi a member of which accompanied one of the early Nizams to Hyderabad. His grandfather was Maharaja Narendra Pershad who was a member of the Council of Regency during the minority of the late Nizam. He comes of the same stock as Maharaja Chandu Lal. Maharaja Narendra Pershad gave his grandson an excellent training in his younger days and he pursued his studies with assiduity and intelligence, in Arabic and Persian, under tutors of exceptional abilities. He also learnt English, Telegu and Marathi.

Maharaja Sir Kishen Pershad Shad born 1864 A. D.

Maharaja Sir Kishen Pershad wrote with merit in Persian, Arabic and Urdu. As a prose writer he has the reputation of producing works with singular ease, lucidity and charm. He wrote poetry under the *nom de poete* of Shad and became the pupil of the Nizam Mir Mahbub Ali Khan Bahadur who bestowed on him the distinction of *Shagird-i-Khas Asaf Jah* (the special pupil of Asaf Jah). He also edited two Journals entitled *Dabdaba-i-Asafia* and *Mahbub-ul-Kalam*, the Nizam regularly contributing to the latter. Sir Kishen Pershad is a Sufi and his writings are replete with sufistic doctrines. He has published his diwans in Urdu and Persian. One of his diwans entitled *Khumkada-i-Rahmat* is in praise of the Prophet Mohammad. It shows how he transcends religious and sectarian prejudices and how he believes in the brotherhood of man. He is noted for his liberal patronage and ready succour to scholars and carries on the noble traditions of his house. It is true that he is not so lavish as Maharaja Chandu Lal which is more or less due to the change of time. He is the author of more than forty works. A few of them are : *Bazm Khayal*, three volumes ; *Rubaiyat-i-Shad* ; *Hadya-i-Shad* ; *Faryad-i-Shad*, *Nazr-i-Shad* ; *Matla-i-Khurshed* ; *Iman-i-Shad* ; *Khumar-i-Shad* ; *Naghma-i-Shad*; *Armanan-i-Wizarat*; *Makhzan-ul-Qawafi*, *Masnavi Ainn-i-Wajood* ; *Masnavi Sir-i-Wajood*. Shad is a most facile writer. His ease in composing Urdu verses and in translating them from Arabic and Persian verses into Urdu verse is marvellous. His poems are good in matter and form.

In 1892 A. D. the hereditary post of Peshkar was conferred on Rajah Kishen Pershad by the late Nizam with the title of Rajayan-i-Rajah Maharaja Bahadur which his forefathers had enjoyed. In 1901 he was appointed Prime Minister with the title of Yamin-us-Saltanat. In 1903 he obtained the distinction of K. C. I. E. and in 1910 A. D., G. C. I. E. He retired from his office of Prime Minister in 1912 A. D.

Urdu has found a firm centre in Hyderabad. It is true that there is no superfluous and indiscriminate charity but

scholarship finds ready encouragement and real merit a willing recognition.

The Anjuman-i-Taraqqi-i-Urdu.

The Anjuman deserves more than a passing notice. Formed a little more than a decade ago at Hyderabad it has found considerable development under the fostering care and sympathetic nursing of its able, learned, and talented Honorary Secretary Moulvi Abdul Haq, B. A. He has given to it his whole-hearted care and with the support of its many admirers who are the leading lights in the Urdu language and literature who with the generous patronage of the Nizam, the Anjuman is a flourishing body doing considerable work of great importance in advancing and promoting the cause of the Urdu language and literature. Important works in English are being translated into Urdu with great care and marked scholarship. English and European classics are being translated into Urdu. Sir Thomas Buckle's History of Civilisation has been translated under the name of *Tarikh-i-Tamuddun.* Abbot's Napoleon, Plutarch's Lives, Lecky's History of Morals and various other books have either been translated and published or are in course of preparation or are in contemplation and are included in the list of projected works. Standard works on Science, Economics, Psychology, Ethics and History, either in original or in translation, have been undertaken. Old Urdu classics have been reprinted and edited with thorough care and illuminating introductions which show exactness and scholarship. Committees have been formed to examine the Urdu script and to improve it with a view to regularise it, simplify it and to facilitate the imparting of it to the young. Professor Brown's Literary History of Persia and Nicholson's Literary History of Arabia have been translated and sent to press for publication. Its activities have extended to Arabic, Persian and French besides English. A list of technical terminology and scientific vocabulary has been issued to enrich Urdu and to make the work of translation easy. Lexicons and Dictionaries have not been neglected. A book of literary idioms peculiar to the artisan and workmen and people with a profession has been got ready. The Concise Oxford English Dictionary has been ordered to be translated into Urdu and about thirty people are engaged on it. When ready, it will supply a wide and longfelt want. The Society is trying to found a suitable type for Urdu, easy to read, to facilitate printing. Its activities are manifold and laudable. What is needed is more enthusiasm, greater number of workers and greater speed and life in its work. "Urdu", the organ of the Society, issued quarterly, under the editorship of its Honorary Secretary, is one of the leading Urdu Magazines of India, containing a vast amount of interesting and important matter relating to Urdu literature and language.

Osmania University at Hyderabad Deccan.

"The Osmania University has come into existence in response to a widespread demand in the Dominion for a type of higher education calculated to satisfy the intellectual and cultural aspirations of the people and having its foundations deep in their national consciousness." It was established, after a great deal of preliminary discussion, under a Charter promulgated by a *Firman* of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of the 22nd September 1918. Education is imparted in all the faculties through the medium of Urdu, English being taught only as a compulsory language to keep in touch with the current of thoughts in the English speaking world. There is only one College attached to it *i.e.*, the Osmania University College which was opened in 1919. It shows steady progress and the enrolment is distinctly on the increase. The University is recognised by the Government of India as an University and its examinations and degrees have been accorded the status of the corresponding examinations and degrees of the University established by law in British India. The University has started with provision for instruction in Theology, Arts, Sciences and Law.

Bureau of Translation.

To overcome the difficulty of text-books for the University, a Bureau of Compilation and Translation was established and attached to the University. It has had most far-reaching effects. 'The Bureau of Translation has during the five years of its existence produced almost all the books required as text-books for the Intermediate and B. A. Classes.' It had a staff of eight qualified translators under the direction of a noted scholar and writer. 'The achievements of this Bureau are beyond all praise, considering the immense difficulties in the way, especially in coining scientific terms for which expert Committees are constantly at work and have devised the terminology for a number of sciences. The Bureau was in the beginning a temporary institution; but in view of its importance to the work of the University His Exalted Highness has been pleased to extend its term of life for ten years. The work attempted by the Bureau embraces the whole range of University studies including History (Eastern and Western, Ancient and Modern) Philosophy, Economics, Mathematics (Pure and Applied), Physics, Chemistry, and Law. The inauguration of the faculties of Education, Engineering and Medicine will necessitate the translation of books on these subjects for which provision is already being made. Over 150 books have been compiled and translated and published. They are mostly standard works on the subject suitable to be used as text-books in the College. The Translation Bureau is a most useful institution for the advancement and progress of Urdu and it should have a long career of usefulness.

CHAPTER XIV.
THE NEW MOVEMENT IN URDU POETRY
THE AGE OF AZAD AND HALI

The preludes to the new movement in Urdu poetry.

The elegy writers and Nazir Akbarabadi saw only the glimmerings of the new dawn which was gradually breaking upon Urdu poetry. They were preparing the way for the new movement which dominated Urdu Literature for half a century and more, and still continues to do so with unabated vigour. They pointed the direction in which reform lay. The marsias contained the seeds of the new movement after the fashion of the oak in the acorn. The beautiful and realistic pictures from Nature, the description of incidents, the portrayal of human emotions, the didactic tone of the compositions, the sincerity and intensity of passion, the purity and freshness of diction, and imagery were all present in marsias in a greater or lesser degree. Nazir Akbarabadi heralded the new order of things in his writings in a more clear and defined manner. In marsia such pictures are subordinated to the main theme and were of the nature of preludes. In Nazir they stand out alone and are themes by themselves. They however did not find vogue, for they were regarded as heresies. The author was contemptuously spoken of in the orthodox circle because of his want of scholarship, his failure to conform to conventional rules, his obscenity and crudity in literary skill. They looked to the form and not to the spirit and hence Nazir's style did not command currency. It needed a sponsor of greater influence and the ascendency of English supplied the much needed stimulus and corrective.

Changed circumstances help the new movement.

The changed times were also not favourable to the continuance of the old *regime* of Urdu poetry. The passing away of the Kingdoms of Delhi and Oudh deprived poets of their cherished patronage and cosy haunts. They were cast adrift on the wide world to the tender mercies of people who though still willing to hear and applaud their lays were unwilling and had not the means to shower money on them as was done in the Courts of Nawabs and Kings. True it is that the drifting poets made a last rally at the courts of Rampur and Hyderabad Deccan but they had not a firm hold and could not command munificent patronage for long. It did not ensure stability and with changed circumstances other uses were found for money and the majority of poets subsisted on starving salaries. People were now more materialistic and businesslike and the rosy atmosphere of poetry had given place to the clear sunshine of prose. Men no longer went crazy over ghazals though the

ghazals still reigned in popularity. The extinction of the kingdoms of Oudh and Delhi, the Indian Mutiny of 1857 A. D. and its aftermath and the subjugation of the country by the English served as eye-openers and people awoke from their dreams and hallucinations to the stern realities of life. The Native States roused themselves to put their houses in order. Even the secluded coteries and blissful haunts of Rampur where poets had congregated were invaded by the new spirit, and the change of the regime affected the poets and their allowances. The atmosphere had changed considerably.

The contact of the English literature.

Contact with English literature affected Urdu in all its branches, and gave a much needed tonic. The English leaven worked in the same manner as the spirit of Renaissance in 16th century or the impulse of Romanticism in 19th century in England Translations led the way to the change. English literature with its splendid heritage of poetry, prose and drama in all its comprehensive branches, evoked admiration, and spurred the pioneers to do something for their language. At first the touch was only indirect, as the high priests of this new movement Hali, Azad and Sir Syed Ahmed, were either totally ignorant of English or very partially acquainted with it. They saw them through the medium of translations made at the instance of the English, but, despite their handicap, they were alive to the beauties and good points, and went forth with a set purpose to reform the old poetry which had a sense of buckram in its form and of rouge in its colouring. It must however be noted that the new impulse worked gradually and haltingly and it did not swamp the old literature completely. Contrary to reformers and enthusiasts of the Renaissance and Romanticism of England, the pioneers maintained a deep respect for old poetry and old masters. Hali's *Yadgar Ghalib* (a critique on Ghalib) and *Azad's Edition* of the Diwan of his favourite Ustad Zauq abundantly prove this. They were no iconoclasts and no spirit of destruction animated them. They only wanted to widen the scope of Urdu literature and to rid it of artificiality and insincerity. They wanted to break the bonds of exaggeration, monotony, and bombast, and to reform the diction and imagery.

Characteristics of the new movement.

The new movement, as it gathered strength and force, found many admirers and advocates. A change was needed, and the people who were not cast in old moulds seized the occasion with avidity. The characteristics of the new movement may briefly be mentioned. New subjects and themes were explored. People found ghazals too narrow and cramped for their melodies. Musaddas and masnavi were largely practised, as they afforded the writer

a large measure of freedom, enabled him to keep rhyme under proper control, and permitted him to impart into his poems that unity of idea which was so conspicuously absent in old Urdu poetry. Effort was made to avoid subjects which required the use of conventional diction, a source of artificiality in old Urdu poetry. Rubai and Qita were also practised. Nature which uptil now served only as a background, was wooed for its own sake in all its moods. The beauties of rains, the rigours of winter, the heat of the summer, the flow of rivers, the delights of mountains, the various landscapes found ready topics which were tabooed, or slightly touched by the old practitioners of Urdu poetry. There were reflective poems, descriptive poems, historical poems narrating stirring episodes in vigorous lines, didactic poems, dialogues, political poems, poems mourning the decadence of the community and exhorting it to be up and doing, in fact poems of all kinds and varying interests. The ghazals themselves underwent a transformation. They no longer concerned themselves with musk ringlets, the downs on cheeks, the comb and betel, collyrium and mole. They dissected emotion and analysed sentiment. They tried to visualise the inner feelings of man and tried to present fleeting thoughts in all their subtlety and delicacy. The ghazals of Hasrat Mohani and Aziz Lucknavi are instances in point.

Changes in metrical and stanzaic forms.

The spirit of invention was abroad. Men were not wanting who wanted to borrow new metrical and stanzaic forms from English poetry, and engraft them in Urdu poetry, without considering the fact that they were unsuited to the genius and organic growth of the language and its undeveloped condition. Efforts were made to introduce blank verse, but such poems were stillborn and never commanded any popularity and currency. It must however be stated that such efforts were few and spasmodic and were made by persons who were masters of older form of versification. The names of Moulvis Syed Ali Haider Tabatabai, Abdul Halim Sharar, Tajwar and Mohammad Azhar Ali Azad Kakuri may be mentioned amongst others. New efforts are still made but the forms are not alien to the structure of the language. They are only variations of metrical and stanzaic forms already in use. Taskin has made an attempt in this direction. Mohammad Uzmat-ullah has made a departure and has successfully adapted Hindi metres in Urdu, uses sweet Hindi words with great excellence, and draws pictures of Indian life and civilization with great fidelity and vividness. The older forms of versification were also largely practised. The Musaddas, the six-lined stanza, which was so largely used in the elegiac poems achieved a triumph in Hali's Ebb and Flow of Islam, a poem of national regeneration.

From that time its success was ensured. It became a common form of versification. Every kind of poetry, descriptive, laudatory, narrative, political, patriotic, didactic, condolatory or historical, began to be written in six-lined stanza. Its merits are obvious. It moves with a swing which is admirably suited for vigour and variety. It affords scope for continuity of description. It flows with an evenness and absence of break, and is very effective and melodious. Other metres were also employed and adapted to the needs of the subjects. There was also a change in the treatment of the subjects. Florid bombast and turgid hyperbole were utterly discarded. Simplicity, purity, strict adherence to nature and sincerity were the keynotes. There was a throb in the poems of the new school; they were tinged with personal emotions. There was also a change in the diction and imagery.

The achievements of the new movement.

Contact with English literature melted the frost that had gathered on Urdu poetry in the Courts of Oudh and Delhi. It widened the scope and breathed a new spirit of freedom and enterprise. It fostered the rise of prose and the growth of criticism and drama. It brought a vast and valuable stock of new imagery, new properties, new scenery and decoration. It introduced a new method of handling emotion and scenery which was unfamiliar. New subjects and themes were explored and new forms and measures invented. It enriched the vocabulary of the Urdu language and made it more copious and capable of greater and subtler shades of meaning. It freed it from the limitations of traditions which were tying the hand of the artist, binding his heart with chains, making his sentiments and thoughts stereotyped, narrowing his horizon and cramping his freedom and genius. It made the young vernaculars rejuvenated "full of hope for the future, full of self-confidence to go out to experiment on new methods and search out new corners of thoughts. It endowed them with a freedom which would enable them to produce works as it were in a new medium." True, there were attendant evils for there followed a laxity in rules of versification, a tendency to pass every subject through the metrical mill and an indiscriminate incorporation of a large number of English words which were uncalled for and indigestible. The benefits however outweighed the disadvantages which could be removed with the passage of time and a gathering of experience.

The three schools in modern Urdu literature. The school of conservative and conventional writers.

It is natural to expect to find three distinct schools both in poetry and prose. "The first school consists of those who look backwards, the extremely conservative men, who live in the dead past. They would rather write in the classical language than in the Vernacular,

they would rather cast their work in the moulds of the classical authors than hammer out new forms. To them it seems that every attempt of thinkers to get back to the actualities of life is an offence, and they hark back to the old philosophical questions and the half Sufi and half Anacreontic ghazals of *ashiqana* poetry. If they had either Sufi or Anacreontic experiences within their own souls, they would at least stand some chance of being poets. Without such experiences, they either degenerate into mechanical imitators, or finished jugglers with words or phrases. Their zeal in the perfection of the traditional metres goes side by side with their superstitious choice of traditional subjects." They have no message to deliver. They write ghazals because it is a mark of scholarship and is an accomplishment. To them the pungent lines of Pope apply with peculiar effect.

> " He writes because his father writ,
> And proclaims himself a bastard by his wit."

They are no real poets but are only practitioners of an old art. To this class belongs the band of poetasters who flood magazines of a catch penny character with their vapid and conventional effusions. They are to be distinguished from the conventional poets who, though capable exponents of old art and worthy disciples of old masters, have exhausted the themes and command no more hearing from the Young India. Both the competent and the incompetent writers of old and conventional themes have been brushed aside by the present march of events, and the trend of Urdu poetry and literature, and they are doing no useful service to it, except to keep the pendulum of literature from swaying to the other extreme.

The second school. The school of the extremist anglicised writers.

The second school touches the other extreme. It stands for everything Western, spurning the heritage of the whole past, disdaining all that is fine in classical language, and extolling the beauties of foreign literature and language to the skies, without considering whether it suits the genius of the people. Such a tendency is natural, for the wine of Western culture went to the head, intoxicated it and made it lose its balance. " The votaries of this new school set up the fetish of modern imitation. They would have everything new, to them the past is a thing either to be ashamed of or to be ignored. To them novelty is the test of value in literature." They do not care to see whether the literature touches the soul of the people, or is in communion with their mind, or reflect the atmosphere in which they live. This school was responsible for a number of translations, carelessly done, imperfectly prepared with a view to " sell ". The translations, besides being unfaithful, garbled, crude and unliterary, were not of the best foreign classics, but of works which do not rank as literature. Reynolds has been popular and translated many times. Most

of these translations are not done from the original language at all but through intermediary languages, thus making the catching of the spirit of the original doubly difficult. "This tame submission to secondhand translation of indifferent literature goes hand in hand with the adoption of the pseudo style which the English call Journelese—a slip-shod language which neither attempts shades of thought, nor discriminates between degrees nor probes into recesses." This is generally the charge against the hack writers and popular novelists who flood the market with their contemptible and mischievous works, and the hurried newspaper-men. "A reaction against Classicism should not mean slip-shod expression, flaring colours or monstrous shapes. Literature must not prefer the vulgar to the beautiful, the gigantic to the well proportioned, the noisy to the melodious."

The third school. The school of those who combine the best of the two.

The third school is the most important as it is creating literature and bringing into existence new and fine traditions. "It seeks its inspiration in the present, but is fully conscious of the mighty heritage of the past. Reverent of traditions, it seeks its channels of inspiration from what it sees around it, it cannot help being original. Its object is like that of Jason—the quest of the golden fleece in unexplored lands of thought and emotion. They are not merely merchants who buy in one country and sell in another. They are the makers and the creators of poetry and take their raw material from the soil, weaving it into new and beautiful fabrics. They prepare their own ambrosia to feed their own minds and the minds of the nation to which they belong. They love and understand the past, but they also have a dignified appreciation of the present and they are not afraid to face the future." To this school belong the most eminent of the poets and *literateurs*—Azad, Hali, Sarur, Iqbal, Asar and Afsar, Hasrat and Akbar, Sarshar and Sharar. They combine in themselves of what is best and finest in the literatures indigenous and foreign, and it is on this school that the hopes of the future rest.

Hali 1837 A. D.—1914 A. D.

Altaf Hussain poetically surnamed Hali (modern), was born in 1837 A. D. at Panipat. He came of a noble stock of Ansaris, being descended from Khwaja Malik Ali on the father's side and a respectable Syed family on the mother's side. Khwaja Malik Ali, the founder of the family, was noted for his erudition in his time. He migrated to India from Herat in the time of Ghyasuddin Balban, and was given a few fertile villages in the neighbourhood of Panipat for his maintenance. He was also appointed a Kazi of the place, entrusted with the duties of fixing the standard rates of the market, and to lead the faithful

in prayer on the Id days. Hali's father, Khwaja Aizad Bakhsh, was not in affluent circumstances. He died when Hali was only nine years of age. His mother suffered from a mild form of insanity, and the care of rearing up Hali devolved upon his elder brother and sister. According to the old usage in orthodox families, Hali was made to learn the Quran by heart, and then commenced his studies in Persian and Arabic but they were never systematic, and were of a haphazard character. Syed Jafar Ali, nephew of Mir Mamaun Dehlvi, was the first teacher of Persian, and Moulvi Ibrahim Husain Ansari, who had returned from Lucknow after completing his studies, taught him Arabic. His studies had not far advanced when he was forced to get married he being only seventeen, though marriage at such an age was not an unusual occurrence in those days. The thirst for knowledge in him was unsatisfied and knowing that his wife would be well cared for in her rich parents' home Hali left surreptitiously for Delhi in 1854 A. D. and studied under Nawazishali, a well-known teacher and preacher of his day, for a year and a half. He read logic, philosophy, prosody, grammar, and other subjects included in the curriculum of that age. He did not study English for it was regarded as heterodox and looked upon with contempt and slight by the learned in oriental lore. In 1855 A. D. his brother and sister insisted on his return to Panipat and he returned and his studies in Delhi suffered an interruption but he carried them on privately in a discursive manner. In 1856 A. D. Hali secured a petty post in the Collector's office at Hisar but the Mutiny of 1857 A. D. and disturbances at Hisar made him return to his native place, where he resumed his disconnected studies and read books on theology, rhetoric, logic and philosophy. He attained considerable proficiency in these subjects and, after four years of stay at Panipat he became a companion to Nawab Mustafa Khan (1806-1869 A. D.) a big landowner of Jahangirabad in Bulandshahr District, United Provinces. This nobleman was a man of letters and a poet who wrote verses under the name of *Shaifta* in Urdu and *Hasrati* in Persian. It is said to be a debatable question whether Hali ever submitted his poems to Shaifta for correction but it is true, on his own admission, that he benefited much by his society. From one of his verses it may be clearly inferred that he consulted Shaifta as a poetical master, and had his poems corrected in the beginning. The poetic and literary atmosphere, the genial company of Shaifta, the ease and comfort all tended to foster the spirit of poetry in Hali, and he began to send his efforts to Ghalib. He remained with Shaifta as a companion and as an instructor to his son for about eight years, when he went to seek his fortune at Lahore the resort of the exiled

men of letters after the Mutiny of 1857 A. D. He got an appointment in the Government Book Depot, Lahore, where his duties consisted of revising translations of English books into Urdu for the Education Department, with a view to improve their language and make it modern and up-to-date. This indirect touch with one of the best literatures of Europe administered a much needed stimulus, and gave an impetus to his thoughts. He stayed on this post for about four years, when he came back to Delhi for which he was pining, as a teacher in Anglo-Arabic School. He also served as a teacher in the Chiefs' College at Lahore for about 8 months, but, finding the post not to his taste, he returned to his original appointment at Delhi. In Delhi he came under the influence of Sir Syed Ahmad, the great socio-religious reformer, and the founder of Aligarh College, and wrote his epoch-making poem "The Ebb and Flow of Islam", a book of national regeneration. In 1887 A. D., while he was employed as a teacher in the Arabic School at Delhi, the late Sir Asman Jah of Hyderabad came to Aligarh, and, on his being introduced to him by Sir Syed, a stipend of Rs. 75 per month was bestowed on him by the Nizam's Government for carrying on literary work, which was raised to Rs. 100 per mensem when the poet visited Hyderabad in connection with a deputation for an increase in the grant-in-aid to M.-A. O. College. He retired from service and spent his time in lettered leisure at Panipat. In 1904 A. D. the title of Shams-ul-Ulema, the Sun of the Scholars, was bestowed on him in recognition of his great learning and literary work. He died at the ripe age of 77 in 1914 A. D.

Hali the man.

As a man, Hali was a true gentleman of the old type, affable, courteous, mild and sympathetic. He never aspired to worldly grandeur and he led the true life of a man of letters utterly devoted to his work. His sympathies were deep and wide, and there was no sectarian bias in him. He acted upto his ideals, and practised what he preached.

The poetic career of Hali – The influence of Ghalib, Shaifta and English literature.

Hali's poetic career began in Delhi when he had slipped out of his home as a lad of seventeen. It is customary in the Orient for every learned man to be able to versify as it is counted as an accomplishment. He often waited on Ghalib in Delhi, and learned the art of poetry by sitting at his feet. He attended the poetical contests and sought for elucidation of thorny points from Ghalib, who was impressed by the talents of the enthusiastic student and advised him to write verses. He, however, did not get much practice at Delhi, but under the influence of Shaifta his poetical talents flowered, and his association not only

gave a stimulus to the composition of verses, but chastened his style and changed his outlook on poetry.) He disliked bombast and hyperbole, and preferred accurate description in simple and direct language tinged with personal emotion, dipped in the fire of genuine passion. Ghalib still corrected his poems and continued to dominate him, but the influence of Shaifta and his style was irresistible. Hali left Jahangirabad on the death of Shaifta, and sought service at Lahore, where he was very unhappy, feeling himself an exile in adverse circumstances among strangers. His description of Lahore and its inhospitality reveal in an interesting manner the condition of his mind. In the Government Book Depot, Hali came in contact with Western literature through translations and the contact was very wholesome to him. It was a turning point in his literary career, and we see distinct and clear glimmerings of that true dawn which broadened into the sunshine of modern Urdu literature. Hali admired the wide scope of English poetry and its sublimity, simplicity and purity and he resolved to adopt these ideals in Urdu prose. (A poetical and literary society had already been founded at Lahore in 1874 A. D. by Moulana Mohammad Hussain Azad at the instance of Colonel Holroyd the then Director of Public Instruction and a great promoter of Urdu literature in the Punjab.) It was not after the manner of old *Mushairas*, where poems were composed after a particular refrain or *Misrah Tarah* as it is technically called. No restriction was placed and the poets were at liberty to recite their compositions on subjects settled in the Assembly. (Azad, the forerunner of such poems, had already laid the foundations of the new movement.) Hali was one of the earliest promoters of it and took keen part in those contests. He recited four of his earliest poems which were highly appreciated. The masnavis *Barkharit* (Rainy Season), *Nishat Umaed* (The Pleasures of Hope), *Munazara-i-Ramh-o-Insaf* (a Colloquy between Mercy and Justice) and *Hubb-i-Watan* (Patriotism) were recited in the *Mushairas*.

The influence of Sir Syed Ahmad.

The influences of Ghalib, Shaifta and English translations on Hali's poetic career have been noticed and the last but not least, the influence of Sir Syed Ahmad remains to be considered. Sir Syed Ahmad was at this time engaged on the laudable object of regenerating the Muhammadans who were decadent and irresponsive to the needs of the time. Having noticed Hali, he asked him to write a poem on the fallen condition of the Muhammadans. The famous Musuddus was the result. It was a tremendous success, and leapt into sudden popularity. A pastiche imitation of his style was adopted by others but none could achieve that measure of success which

was rightly given to Hali. He was at once acclaimed as a national poet. He followed the Musuddus with other passionate elegies on the devastations of Delhi, and on the death of Hakim Mahmud Khan in which pictures of past glory are intermingled with those of present decadence and lethargy. He took upon himself the *role* of a religious preceptor, a preacher and a reformer. He exhorted his co-religionists in stirring verses to gird up their loins and to do their bit nobly and selflessly. His sympathies were not confined to his community but broadened to the Indians in general. His ideals of noble womanhood embodied in his famous poem *Chup-ki-Dad* (Tribute to Silence) and his patriotic lay, the prayer of the widow (*Munajat-i-Bewa*), are exquisite. They are full of fire, and appeal to all classes and communities alike. Towards the latter part of his life his utterances grew more philosophic and thoughtful, as evident from his *Tarkib bund* called *Tauhfatul Akhwan* (The Brethren's Present).

His works in poetry.

Hali was a prolific writer in prose and poetry. He has left many works behind him. His prose writings will be considered in another chapter. The following is the list of his poems.

1. Masnavis, on Bigotry and Justice; on Mercy and Justice; on the Hand of God; on "Rainy Season", on Patriotism; and on Pleasures of Hope.

2. Musuddus Hali, the famous Musuddus of Hali, "the Ebb and Flow of Islam."

3. Shikwai-Hind, "The Wail of India."

4. The Poetical works of Hali, the Diwan with a long introduction on poetry.

5. Munajat-i-Bewa (Widow's Plaint) and Chup-ki-Dad (Tribute to Silence).

6. Elegies on the death of Ghalib, Hakim Mahmud Khan, Devastation of Delhi and Sir Syed Ahmad.

7. Majmua-i-Nazm Hali, a collection of stray poetical pieces of Hali.

8. Majmua-i-Nazm Farsi, a collection of Persian poetry of Hali.

"The Masnavis."

The Masnavis, most of them being colloquies, are very popular and have been incorporated in the text-books of the Universities. They are simple, direct, free from exaggeration and a deep incrustation of similes, and metaphors. They preach morality in an attractive manner. They inculcate high principles in interesting dialogues. The merits and demerits of each controversialist are brought out in a narrative form interspersed with allusions

to ancient and modern histories and mythologies. In the masnavi of Mercy and Justice each claims the palm of superiority by reciting its own virtues and the vices of the other. In the end, Reason appears as an arbitrator and holds the balance even by adjudging both to be complementary to each other. The poem on the Rainy Season is exquisite and charming and contains an attractive description of the rains in India in their various phases. It describes the benefits of the rainy weather, the velvet verdure of the plains and mountains, the delights of human beings and animals. The language is simple, natural and easy. There are no dignified Persianised constructions or polyglot words of foreign extraction. The style is unadorned and unaffected with no preponderance of high flown imageries and extravagant foreign metaphors. They embody the spirit of the new movement and mark Hali as one of the pioneers of the new style. It is true that they do not attain to a very high watermark of poetical distinction but their value lies in their heralding of a new order of things and their directing the attention of their contemporaries and successors to fresh woods and pastures new.

"The Musuddus-i-Hali, 1879 A. D.

Musuddus Hali or the Ebb and Flow of Islam is one of the epoch-making books of the age. Its popularity is still unabated and it still finds thousands of readers. It was a revelation, a landmark in the literary history of Urdu language. A new star swam into the ken of Urdu poets. It gave a lead to the national and patriotic poems of India, and demonstrated the value of the six-lined stanza as a vehicle for such stirring poems. It found many imitators, but none excelled or came upto it in fervour, in thought, and in expression. It is a poem of national regeneration, describing the past glories of Islam, the triumphs and achievements of its worthy leaders, the ideals and the culture of the bygone past, the lethargy and the decadence of the present age, the degradation of the Mohammadans in the living present. It winds up by a passionate appeal to his co-religionists to rouse up and take their proper place in the history of the world. It is at once passionate, soul stirring, full of fire and vigour, brilliance and spontaneous flow, without an effort to strive for an effect. It appeals to the old and the young alike. The success of this new poem was untold. "It was a trumpet call to the Mohammadans to put their house in order. It achieved an immediate success on publication. There is no other modern Urdu book so well known. It is familiar to every educated Mohammadan in India and many men of the last generation knew it by heart. Its chief merit consisted in taking stock of the national virtues and vices; like a reformer Hali put all the virtues in the past and vices in the present......The

poet goes back to the times of ignorance, the pre-Islamic period in Arabia and draws a lurid picture of a sandy and rocky country, isolated from rest of the world, in which the people were divided into warring tribes and given over to the lowest forms of superstition, and idolatory. Into such a world was sent the Prophet. The first fruits of his missions were the spread of knowledge and truth, the destruction of cruelty and religious intolerance, the softening of manners and the raising of standard in fact all those virtues the want of which in modern Indian Mohammadans he satirises in the latter part of his poem. A rapid historical survey takes us through the services of Islam in the moral and intellectual world. The Muslims made their homes in every clime and country, and have left their traces in Spain, Baghdad and the country of the Himalayas. The causes of the decline are lightly touched." It extorted its meed of praise from the most adverse and hostile critics of Hali. To quote Sir Syed Ahmad, "It will be quite appropriate to say that this book starts a new era in our poetry. The clarity, the beauty and the flow that characterises it cannot be praised too much. It is surprising to find a subject treated with so much regard for actualities and with such absence of exaggeration in far-fetched similes which are the *stock in trade* of the poets and poesy and yet so full of effect, elegance, and eloquence. Many of its stanzas cannot be read without one's eyes getting wet with tears. Anything that springs from the heart appeals to the heart...." This poem was printed and distributed broadcast and it was sung in assemblies, pulpits, mosques, and conferences.

"Shikwa-i-Hind," 1887 A. D.

In the same strain were composed the *Shikwa-i-Hind* and *Qasida-i-Ghyasia* recalling the splendid past and contrasting it with the degeneration that has set in India. Asceticism had given place to pleasure, simplicity to luxury, virility to emasculation, vigour to sloth and lassitude. They contain pictures in contrast but they have now lost much of their force and point and had been purposely highly coloured before to rouse the slumbering community from lethargy.

"Marsias."

The elegies on the death of Ghalib, Hakim Mahmud Khan and Sir Syed are creditable poems. The Marsia on Ghalib is extremely poignant, full of pathos and fire. It is lament made metrical. It is remarkable for its genuine note of pathos and sincerity of emotion. It is an outburst of pent up feelings of the heart surcharged with grief. Simplicity is the keynote. It is a remarkable achievement which enhances the reputation of Hali as a poet. The elegy on Hakim Mahmud Khan is couched in the same strain as the Musuddus

and Shikwa. A picture of the devastation of Delhi is very luridly drawn and the fallen condition of Mohammadans is graphically portrayed.

"Munajat-i-Bewa" 1892 A. D.

"The prayer of a widow" is a remarkable piece in an unfamiliar meter which appeals to a larger circle of readers than the Musuddus and Shikwa. Reformation in social matters was in the air. In Bengal, the cause of widows was championed by Vidyasagar about the same time. This poem reveals in a realistic manner the woe-begone and pitiable condition of the widow and the wail she sends forth in it is truly heart-rending. It ends with a note of resignation. It has been translated into many languages including Sanscrit.

"Chup-ki-Dad."

"Chup-ki-Dad" eulogises the good qualities of womanhood and sets forth its noble ideals. It was recited in Hyderabad Deccan by the author amidst thundering applause to a large audience presided over by Maharaja Sir Kishan Prasad the then Premier of the State. It is distinguished for its simplicity, flow, subtlety and directness of appeal. In these poems Hali achieved the distinction of being an Indian poet free from the cramping communal influences.

"Diwan-i-Hali." 1892 A. D.

The Diwan alone remains to be considered. It comprises of a long introduction discussing poetry in abstract, a preface, qitas, ghazals both modern and ancient in spirit, quatrains, qasidas, tarkibbands, and chronograms. The introduction deals with various definitions and aspects of poetry and covers a large ground. The qitas are ethical inculcating some moral or high principle in the garb of a short story, or a dialogue. Some of them crystallize thought in a beautiful and terse manner. The ghazals only form the bulk and are interesting. Of his old ghazals those are included which were apiece with the modern spirit. They evince a freedom from exaggerated bombast of thought and expression. The modern ghazals sound a new note and mark the advent of a new spirit. They are full of emotion and feeling and often maintain a continuity of thought which is one of the features of the new form of poetry. The quatrains, a series of crisp epigrams on every variety of subjects, contain words of wisdom and impart useful lessons in telling words. In this he follows the footsteps of his predecessor. They are widely read and appreciated and have been rendered into English, by Mr. G. E. Ward. His qasidas do not contain hyperbolical encomia on the subject of his poem but in contradistinction with the old poets draw attention to their duties and responsibilities. The ode on the elevation of Mir Usman Ali Khan the Nizam of Hyderabad is an illustration in point.

Prolegomena to Hali's Diwan published 1890 A. D.

Hali gives expression to his literary ideals in the preface and also surveys in a comprehensive manner the poetry of East and West. The introduction is masterly although a little superficial. Hali tried to affect reformation in Urdu ghazal and enunciated many changes both in form and theme. He deprecated the idea of celebrating the love of courtesans in ghazals and wanted to extend the field of ghazal so as to embrace love in its best meanings. He tabooed the description of ladies' toilets. He also exhorted the poets to refrain from having gratuitous flings against the *Sheikhs* and *Zahids* (the abstemious) the pious and the preachers so common in Urdu poetry. The sphere of the ghazal should be widened and it may not only contain philosophical, sufistic and moral but 'natural' national and political themes. The poetic diction should be delicate. Words and idioms should be correctly used. Unfortunately Hali himself could not escape the dangers. There should not be any preponderance of figures of speech nor should they form the pivot of verses. The meters, qafias and radifs should be easy and sweet and not difficult and bizarre as those adopted by Mushaffi, Insha and Shah Nasir. So far as possible the *radif* should be dispensed with. Hali was the first to sing of the national decadence in ghazal as in Musuddus.

Importance of Hali.

Hali occupies an unique position in modern Urdu literature. He was the first to reform the ghazal and the qasida. He was the first to demonstrate the value of the Musuddus. He was the first to bewail in ghazal and musuddus the fall of the Muslims from the high state and to exhort them to reform. He was the first to write a poem on '*watan*' motherland. He dealt the most formidable blow at the traditional style the outstanding features of which were artificiality, conventionality and insincerity. He was the first to adopt unity of idea and a diction free from convention. He was the first to introduce political themes in his verses. Along with Azad, Hali shares the credit of inaugurating the new movement in Urdu poetry.

Hali as one of the founders of the new school. His style.

Hali is one of the progenitors of the new style. The outstanding features of his style are: faithfulness to nature, freedom from hyperbole in thought and language, simplicity and directness, pathos and genuine emotions. His language is simple and easily comprehensible. There is a wonderful restraint in the use of figures of speech and imageries. There is no effort to appear learned and scholarly. His writings are characterized by spontaneous flow and fervid passion.

His defects.

His defects are that he is occasionally lax in prosody and often uses words incorrectly. There is preponderance of unfamiliar English words and he unmistakably shows his love for them to give his poems a distinction in the eyes of his compeers. To the punctilious, the wrong use of idioms often mars the beauty of a passage. He very rarely goes to the empyrean heights and sometimes flounders along the moor of doggerel with the most exasperating shambles. The *role* of a reformer aud a nationalist sets a limitation to his works of art.

His position.

The importance of Hali in Urdu literature can never be belittled. Besides his position as a prose writer and a critic, he is one of the leaders of the new movement who changed the current of Urdu poetry. He ushered in national and patriotic poems and his services to foster the growth of poems on landscapes and nature are invaluable. He was not only a poet but a reformer, a preacher, and a teacher. He freed Urdu poetry from its pernicious tendencies, infused vigour and gave it a new start. As a poet he may not be assigned the foremost rank in Urdu poetry but his position as one of the greatest benefactors of Urdu literature is unchallenged.

AZAD: a distinguished man of letters.

As one of the fathers of the new movement, a pioneer of the new spirit that was dawning on Urdu literature, Mohammad Husain Azad ranks very high. He is one of the greatest of modern poets, a most distinguished writer of racy, piquant, delightful prose, a critic of considerable merit, a great educationist, a clever journalist, a remarkable and an unimitable stylist and a great authority on modern Persian. His services to Urdu language are immense and valuable. To him the Urdu poetry owes the foundation of the new kind of poetry. He was in short a man of letters in the fullest sense of the word. The biographical details of his rather uneventful life would be mentioned in the section of prose which has greater claims on Azad. His poetic career need only be considered here.

The poetical career of Azad.

Azad was essentially a poet and had really a poetic temperament. It flashes out in prose and lends to it the charm and dignity of unversified poetry. Being the son of a friend of Zauq the spirit of poetry was fostered in him by his constant association with that master poet and other great poets of the time. He attended with his Ustad Zauq the poetical contests held in Delhi and benefited immensely from the discussions as to the merits and demerits of compositions. He was passionately attached to his poetical preceptor and his

influence allied to his own poetic temperament moulded Azad's career as a poet. The Mutiny of 1857 A. D. came as a sad blow and again there was an exodus of poets from Delhi. People went out to escape the tumult to gain a livelihood. Lahore afforded shelter to many. Azad, Rai Bahadur Munshi Pyarelal, Pandit Man Phool Mir Munshi, Syed Ahmad the compiler of the famous Urdu lexicon *Farahang-i-Asafia*, Moulvi Karimuddin and Khwaja Altaf Hussain Hali were brought together there. At the instance of Colonel Holroyd the then Director of Public Instruction who was deeply interested in Persian and Urdu, Mohammad Hussain Azad founded a literary society which held literary contests every month at the premises of Anjuman-i-Punjab. The object of these literary reunions was to divest Urdu poetry of exaggeration and an excessive love for metaphors. A departure was made from the usual practice for instead of giving a refrain as a model only titles of subjects were suggested. Azad had already prepared the ground for holding such novel *Mushairas* for in many of the sessions of the Anjuman-i-Punjab under whose auspices the contests were held, Azad delivered lectures and discoursed in the same strain. In his lecture on "Thoughts on Poetry and Poetic Themes" he expatiates on the nature of true poetry, on its essentials and the evils to which it was exposed. In the inaugural address on the opening of the first session of literary contest in May, 1874 A. D., he pointed out the defects of Urdu poetry, its want of simplicity and naturalness, repetitions and exaggerations, its hair-breadth subtleties and far-fetched flights. He emphasised that Urdu poetry must walk out in the sun and free itself from the cramping influence of erotic themes and rosy boudoirs. He directed poets to tap other sources, to have recourse to Bhasha for simplicity, naturalness and effect, to European literature for directness, usefulness and widening of scope.

His poetic works.

Azad practised what he preached. He himself led the way by writing many small masnavis on the new subjects and various poems in the new style. Even when Azad was a small boy he used to write verses. His close association with his poetical master Zauq gave a stimulus to his poetical activities. After the death of Zauq, Azad also consulted Aish and composed ghazals and qasidas and read them in the mushairas of Delhi. None of the poems survived as they were lost during the Mutiny. After 1857 A. D. Azad obtained employment in Jind State and began to write salaam, marsia, qasida, ghazal and rubai. Some of these poems are included in the *Nazm Azad* which is a collection of Azad's poems published by his son M. Mohammad Ibrahim in 1899 A. D. In Lahore he laid the foundation of the new Mushaira in which he read his address on Urdu poetry and recited his new poems 'On the Advent of Night.'

The obscurantists opposed this heterodoxy and so vehement and strong was their opposition that the mushaira enjoyed the very brief existence of only eleven months. Azad was never daunted. He continued to write poems in the new style. He tried to write Urdu poems on the lines of English ones. He aimed at giving Urdu garb to English ideas. These poems were never translations but an attempt was made to capture the spirit of the original. The poem entitled *Ululazmi ke liye koi sad-i-rah nahin hai* (There is no obstacle to enthusiasm) is modelled on but is not a translation of Tennyson's 'Excelsior.' Other poems entitled *Masnavi Sharafat-i-Haqiqi*, *Marfat-i-Illahi*, *Salam Alaik*, *Jaise Chaho Samjho*, *Jughrafia Tibbi ki Pahaili*, *Mubarakbad Jashn Jubilee*, *Ek Tare ka Ashiq* (A lover of a Star), *Mehnat Karo* are more or less written in the style of English poems. *Masnavi Hubb-i-Watàn*, *Masnavi Khuab Aman*, *Masnavi Dad-i-Insaf*, *Masnavi Widai Insaf*, *Masnavi Ganj-i-Qinayat*, *Masnavi Abr-i-Karam*, *Masnavi Zamistan* (Wintet), *Masnavi Masdar-i-Tahzib*, are some of the masnavis which are the product of the new age.

His ghazals and qasidas.

Azad, before he took to the new style, wrote ghazals and qasidas. They are conventional and written according to the canons of such compositions. The ghazals are however sprightly and have force and are sufistic in character. The qasidas are extravagantly laudatory in the approved style of old Urdu poets. These compositions relate to an earlier stage in the development of Azad's art.

His new poems.

Azad along with Hali wrote many new poems on phenomena of nature, love of one's country and various other topics. *Masnavi Shab-i-Qadr* which describes the advent of night and which he read along with his inaugural address at the mushaira in May, 1874 A.D., is a master piece which can compare favourably with the best modern productions. It is powerful with pretty pictures of vivid description. It has a felicity of diction and commendable restraint in the use of imageries. The pen pictures of the student, the petty shopkeeper and the thief are interesting. In *Masnavi Hubb-i-Watan* he strikes a new line and illustrates his meaning by anecdotes both historical and fanciful. *Masnavi Khuab Aman* is exceedingly well written and contains some fine truths in forceful language. *Masnavi Abr Karam* deals with rainy season and belongs to the same category of poems as Hali's *Barkha ritu*. The ode to the Queen Victoria on the Jubilee is characterised by simplicity, fervour and elegance and is a model of simple style. His masnavi entitled *Subah Umeed* (the Dawn of Hope) contains brilliant pictures of beauties of Nature and graphic descriptions of the activities of man. The beautiful and faithful rendering

influence allied to his own poetic temperament moulded Azad's career as a poet. The Mutiny of 1857 A. D. came as a sad blow and again there was an exodus of poets from Delhi. People went out to escape the tumult to gain a livelihood. Lahore afforded shelter to many. Azad, Rai Bahadur Munshi Pyarelal, Pandit Man Phool Mir Munshi, Syed Ahmad the compiler of the famous Urdu lexicon *Farahang-i-Asafia*, Moulvi Karimuddin and Khwaja Altaf Hussain Hali were brought together there. At the instance of Colonel Holroyd the then Director of Public Instruction who was deeply interested in Persian and Urdu, Mohammad Hussain Azad founded a literary society which held literary contests every month at the premises of Anjuman-i-Punjab. The object of these literary reunions was to divest Urdu poetry of exaggeration and an excessive love for metaphors. A departure was made from the usual practice for instead of giving a refrain as a model only titles of subjects were suggested. Azad had already prepared the ground for holding such novel *Mushairas* for in many of the sessions of the Anjuman-i-Punjab under whose auspices the contests were held, Azad delivered lectures and discoursed in the same strain. In his lecture on "Thoughts on Poetry and Poetic Themes" he expatiates on the nature of true poetry, on its essentials and the evils to which it was exposed. In the inaugural address on the opening of the first session of literary contest in May, 1874 A. D., he pointed out the defects of Urdu poetry, its want of simplicity and naturalness, repetitions and exaggerations, its hair-breadth subtleties and far-fetched flights. He emphasised that Urdu poetry must walk out in the sun and free itself from the cramping influence of erotic themes and rosy boudoirs. He directed poets to tap other sources, to have recourse to Bhasha for simplicity, naturalness and effect, to European literature for directness, usefulness and widening of scope.

His poetic works.

Azad practised what he preached. He himself led the way by writing many small masnavis on the new subjects and various poems in the new style. Even when Azad was a small boy he used to write verses. His close association with his poetical master Zauq gave a stimulus to his poetical activities. After the death of Zauq, Azad also consulted Aish and composed ghazals and qasidas and read them in the mushairas of Delhi. None of the poems survived as they were lost during the Mutiny. After 1857 A. D. Azad obtained employment in Jind State and began to write salaam, marsia, qasida, ghazal and rubai. Some of these poems are included in the *Nazm Azad* which is a collection of Azad's poems published by his son M. Mohammad Ibrahim in 1899 A. D. In Lahore he laid the foundation of the new Mushaira in which he read his address on Urdu poetry and recited his new poems 'On the Advent of Night.'

The obscurantists opposed this heterodoxy and so vehement and strong was their opposition that the mushaira enjoyed the very brief existence of only eleven months. Azad was never daunted. He continued to write poems in the new style. He tried to write Urdu poems on the lines of English ones. He aimed at giving Urdu garb to English ideas. These poems were never translations but an attempt was made to capture the spirit of the original. The poem entitled *Ululazmi ke liye koi sad-i-rah nahin hai* (There is no obstacle to enthusiasm) is modelled on but is not a translation of Tennyson's 'Excelsior.' Other poems entitled *Masnavi Sharafat-i-Haqiqi*, *Marfat-i-Illahi*, *Salam Alaik*, *Jaise Chaho Samjho*, *Jughrafia Tibbi ki Pahaili*, *Mubarakbad Jashn Jubilee*, *Ek Tare ka Ashiq* (A lover of a Star), *Mehnat Karo* are more or less written in the style of English poems. *Masnavi Hubb-i-Watân*, *Masnavi Khuab Aman*, *Masnavi Dad-i-Insaf*, *Masnavi Widai Insaf*, *Masnavi Ganj-i-Qinayat*, *Masnavi Abr-i-Karam*, *Masnavi Zamistan* (Wintet), *Masnavi Masdar-i-Tahzib*, are some of the masnavis which are the product of the new age.

His and ghazals qasidas.

Azad, before he took to the new style, wrote ghazals and qasidas. They are conventional and written according to the canons of such compositions. The ghazals are however sprightly and have force and are sufistic in character. The qasidas are extravagantly laudatory in the approved style of old Urdu poets. These compositions relate to an earlier stage in the development of Azad's art.

His new poems.

Azad along with Hali wrote many new poems on phenomena of nature, love of one's country and various other topics. *Masnavi Shab-i-Qadr* which describes the advent of night and which he read along with his inaugural address at the mushaira in May, 1874 A.D., is a master piece which can compare favourably with the best modern productions. It is powerful with pretty pictures of vivid description. It has a felicity of diction and commendable restraint in the use of imageries. The pen pictures of the student, the petty shopkeeper and the thief are interesting. In *Masnavi Hubb-i-Watan* he strikes a new line and illustrates his meaning by anecdotes both historical and fanciful. *Masnavi Khuab Aman* is exceedingly well written and contains some fine truths in forceful language. *Masnavi Abr Karam* deals with rainy season and belongs to the same category of poems as Hali's *Barkha ritu*. The ode to the Queen Victoria on the Jubilee is characterised by simplicity, fervour and elegance and is a model of simple style. His masnavi entitled *Subah Umeed* (the Dawn of Hope) contains brilliant pictures of beauties of Nature and graphic descriptions of the activities of man. The beautiful and faithful rendering

of the song of the Flower Girl in Lytton's 'Last Days of Pompeii' in elegant Urdu is simply exquisite and shows his great powers to the best advantage.

Azad was not so intensely devoted to poetry as Hali. Azad had his limitations as a poet. Hali came under the influence of Sir Syed and became a national bard bewailing the decadent condition of the Mohammadans and exhorting them to be worthy of their past glorious traditions. Azad had a more literary bent and he shot forth as an educationist, a journalist and a critic. He saw the needs of the time and he sacrificed his inclinations to his convictions in a certain degree. His life may thus be called a life of 'literary martyrdom.' He did not give vent to his poetic soul for his genius lay essentially in prose and also that he saw the needs of the country and his countrymen. His pent up fervour found an outlet in his prose which is never prosaic but is always rich, racy and piquent.

His limitations as a poet.

The outstanding qualities of his poetic style are :—spontaneous flow of language and thought, freedom from exaggerated bombast, beauty of description, elegance of diction, apt use of idiom, flight of imagination, sincerity, skilful technique and charm of style.

His style.

The position of Azad as a poet is unchallenged though scant justice has been done to him by prejudiced and carping critics who looked with disfavour at his literary heresies which were a revolt from established conventions. He is the founder of the new form of poetry which took the succeeding age by storm. He was one of the pioneers of the new movement and did more than others to popularise it. Along with Hali he shared the glory of ushering in the new order of things which had such a far-reaching and momentous influence on the career of Urdu literature.

Azad's position as a poet.

Mohammad Ismail was a resident of Meerut and was born on 12th November, 1844 A. D. He entered into the Education Department at the early age of sixteen and was employed in its office. After a while, he got promotions and was appointed a Head Moulvi of Persian and served as such at Saharanpur and Meerut. In 1888 A. D., he was transferred to the Central Normal School, Agra, where he stayed for about 12 years and retired on pension in 1899 A. D. He came back to Meerut and lived a life of lettered leisure. He was made a Khan Saheb in recognition of his literary and meritorious services. He died on 1st November, 1917 A. D.

Ismail, 1844-1917 A. D.

During his stay at Agra, Mohammad Ismail compiled many Urdu Readers and Primers for the lower Urdu classes which

were approved and prescribed by the Government and continued to be in the curricula for many years. They were extremely simple, instructive and attractive. They were admirably suited for young boys and girls. What Azad did for the Punjab Ismail did for the United Provinces in a greater degree. The readers were distinguished for their flow and simplicity of style, language and subject. The writing of easy primers was his *metier* and he had not been surpassed as yet.

Ismail was a poet and a prose writer of considerable merit. The outstanding quality of his style was perspicuity. Whatever he wrote was luminous and simple. He was a master of both styles—olden and modern. He has tried every species of verse and he has distinguished himself. He has written erotic, political, moral, social and 'natural' verses and he has acquitted himself creditably. Moulvi Shibli held him in high esteem and ranked him next to Hali. His *kuliyat* was published in 1901 and contains his poems both ancient and modern. His ghazals are sufistic and bear an impress of his genius. They show his mastery in verse technique. Ismail was a sufi and was a spiritual pupil of Hazarat Ghos Ali Saheb of Panipat. His modern pieces are admirable and forecast the excellence achieved by some of the present-day first class writers. He wrote with success in Urdu blank verse and his experiments with other verse-forms bear witness to his skill and talents. He improved the ghazal by giving prominence to sufistic and moral themes in elegant language. He also wrote copiously on moral and ethical subjects and introduced beautiful stories 'to point a moral and adorn a tale' as was the practice of old poets. Some of the fables in Æsop's tales are thus presented in the garb of poetry. Ismail also was a keen communal poet like Hali, Shibli and Nazir Ahmad. He wrote a long poem on the Fort of Agra in which he describes the rise and decadence of the Muslim community and also pointed the path of progress. As a poet describing the phenomena of nature Ismail was distinctly successful.

Ismail had other works in hand. He wished to write a Urdu grammar and a Urdu dictionary on modern lines and has left the manuscripts which are said to be preserved in his family. He had also undertaken to write a biography and a critique on the works of Amir Khusru and had annotated one of his poems, *Masnavi Qiran-us-Sadain,* when death cut short his activities. He also wished to write a history of Urdu literature and language but it was never more than begun. Ismail has an honoured place amongst the modern writers and is a conspicuous example of the admirable blending of the old and modern styles.

Durga Sahai Sarur, 1873-1910 A.D.

Munshi Durga Sahai Sarur, poetically surnamed Sarur (Joy), was one of the best exponents of the new movement in Urdu poetry. He was one

of its stalwart leaders who led the way. He came from Jehanabad a town in the District of Pilibhit and was born in 1873 A. D. He was a born poet of a very high order and combined in himself of what was the best in the old and the new types of poetry. The fresh and high thoughts and the pure and the sublime emotions of the new age with the love for motherland are blended with the pleasant imageries and terse and compact expression of the old. He avoids the charybdis of bald commonplace style of the new age as also the scylla of impure sentiments and conventional treatment of the old. In him artistic treatment is combined with fresh sublime and patriotic thoughts with the excellence not seen hithertofore in Urdu poetry.

Sarur: the man.

Sarur was a devoted votary at the shrine of the muses. He lived a life of complete absorption in poetry. He was thoroughly immersed in it, dead to all other things of the world. His every movement was dedicated to poetry. He was extremely liberal and never cared to think of to-morrow. Hence he was always in straitened circumstances but poverty did not seem "to chill his noble rage." He had no party prejudices and communal differences. There was no show or ostentation in his life and his mode of living was extremely simple even ascetic. There was nothing of sneak about him and his vices were allied to his virtues. His thoughtlessness for his comforts originated in his careless bonhomie temperament which disdained attention to monetary matters. One of his failings was wine which like Ghalib spurred him on to higher flights and lent wings to his fancy. Drink was his bane, and ultimately ruined his career as a poet and cut short a budding life of great promise before it has fully blossomed. He died in 1910 A. D. at the young age of 37.

Sarur: the master of the pathetic.

The outstanding characteristic of Sarur's poetry is the portrayal of the sad and the pathetic. He is the master of the tragic. His temperament was closely allied to grief, despondency and gloom. Like Mir, Sarur's life was not one long joy. There is a real note of sorrow. There is nothing of conventionality about him.

Sarur is the author of numerous poems which have been published in two collections. The Zamana Press published the poem which appeared in the Zamana under the title of *Khumkhana-i-Sarur* and the Indian Press published a selection of his poems in a volume entitled *Jam-i-Sarur*. Much of his work is lost or sold away to puny poets for paltry remuneration and which was subsequently published under their own names. On the death of Sarur correspondence was published which clearly proved that at least one poet, taking advantage of Sarur's poverty, commissioned him to write various kinds of poems for him which he sent out to the world as his own. This publication of the

correspondence caused a great scandal and exposed the ways of poetasters who lacking in poetic talent but having plenty of money pass off as poets preying on the thoughts of others.

The patriotic poems of Sarur.

Sarur is eminently patriotic and his poems are of considerable merit. He is not a singer for a particular community or a sect. He is the real national poet of India. He not only appeals to his coreligionists but to the wider Indian public. The most notable of these poems are: *Khak-i-watan* (The Dust of the Motherland), *Urus-i-Hubb-i-Watan* (the Bride of the Love of the Country), *Hasrat-i-watan* (the Longing of the Country), *Yad-i-watan* (the Memory of the Country), *Madar-i-Hind* (Mother India). *Madar-i-Hind* seems to be an echo of the famous 'Bande Mataram' song of Bankim Chandra. All these poems burn with a genuine love for the country and breathe lofty and ennobling sentiments. These poems are directly patriotic but many of his love poems also bear the imprint of his love for the country. His *Gul-o-Bulbul-ka-Fisana* or Story of Rose and Nightingale, *Shama-o-Parwana* or Moth and the Candle all treat of this elevated theme in one form or other.

Historical and religious poems.

Next rank his historical and religious poems. Pathos, sincerity, eloquence, spontaneity and forceful flow are some of the features of this kind of poems. *Padmani*, *Padmani ki Chita* or Funeral Pyre of Padmani, *Sitaji ki Giria-o-Zari* or the Lament of Sita, *Maharaja Dashrath ki Beqarari* or the Tribulations of the Maharaja Dasrath, *Jamuna*, *Ganga* or the Ganges, *Priyag ka Sangam* or the Confluence at Allahabad, *Sati*, *Nur Jahan ka Mazar* or the Tomb of Nur Jahan, *Hasrat-i-Didar* 'Longing for the Vision' and *Nal-o-Damayanti* are all replete with noble reflections and breathe an atmosphere of sorrow, sincerity and genuine passion. *Jumna* and *Ganga* are splendid performances and are distinguished by the loftiness of thought, depth of emotion, earnestness of purpose, command over technique, forcefulness of description and extraordinary flow of verse. They assuredly rank as first class poems. In 'Jumna' quaint references to old Hindu history are very pleasing.

Sarur's employment of Hindi words.

Another remarkable characteristic of Sarur which distinguishes him from his compeers is that he demonstrated the beauty of Hindi words and wove them with striking and pleasing effect in Urdu verses. In his religious poems he has skilfully used words of indigenous origin which are very sweet and full of harmony and colour. His religious poems are very clever, and appeal to Hindus with great force. His scenes from the Ramayana and old mythology are singularly effective.

Sarur is seen at his best in poems which have sorrow for their themes. *Divar-i-Kuhan* or the Decaying Wall, *Hasrat-i-Shabab* or the Regrets of Youth, *Andoh-i-Ghurbat* or the Tribulations of Exile, *Murghan-i-Qafas* or the Ensnared Birds, *Yad-i-Tiflee* or Memories of Childhood, *Bulbul ka Fisana*, *Hasrat-i-Didar*, *Matam-i-Arzu* or the Dirge of the Longing, *Murgh-i-Sayyad* or the Ensnarad Bird and the Fowler are mournful threnodies.

His mournful poems.

Sarur's knowledge of English was limited but he was an adept at translations. Like a true poet he entered into the spirit of the compositions and his poems which are based on those of others read like original ones. His translations are numerous and can number at least twenty. In some he has borrowed only the leading theme and has dressed up his thoughts in attractive garb of his own making: *Murghabi*, *Tarana-i-Khuab* or Song of Dream, *Bachcha aur Hilal* or Child and the Crescent, *Mutala-i-Kutb* or Books, Study of *Karzar-i-Hasti* or Battle of Life, *Umeed aur Tifli* or Hope and Childhood, *Mausam-i-Sarma ka Akhri Gulab* or the Last Rose of the Winter, all testify to his great poetic powers and high imagination. Some of his poems in this vein are original. *Bir bahuti* and *Koil* or Cuckoo are exquisite performances and attain a high watermark of excellence.

Sarur's poems based on translations.

Sarur was never a dry preacher and seldom moralized. He never inflicted a sermon or a homily. He was a poet first and everything afterwards. But his poems achieve the object of art. *Zan-i-Khushkhu* or Wife with amiable qualities. *Be Sabati-i-Dunya* or Transitions of the World, *Ada-i-Sharm* or Blandishment of Modesty are some of his poems which abound in noble sentiments in artistic manner.

The didactic element in the poems of Sarur.

Sarur was a great poet of greater promise. His mind was always on the alert. He could write with great ease and fluency for his practice was great and he was endowed with a poetic gift of high order.

His ease in writing poems.

His favourite vehicle for verses was musuddus or Six-lined Stanza which he used with great effect. He also used many other forms such as mukhammas, tarjihband, tarkibband, tazmin, qasida, qita, masnavi, rubai, and ghazal.

Musuddus.

The characteristics of his poems are: genuine fire, a true portrayal of nature and emotions, loftiness of thought, a charming style, a searching study of the recesses and dark nooks of human heart, a fecundity of thoughts, and consummate skill to draw them in artistic language, a wide knowledge of various subjects, and chastened feelings. Sarur's powers of poetry are remarkable. He had considerable vigour and flow and was a master artist both in original compositions and translations.

The characteristics of his Poems.

Sarur was careless of his reputation as a poet. He never took to his vocation with great seriousness, A bottle of wine was dearer to him than his fame as a poet. Some of his inartistic and clumsy work can be attributed to this pernicious habit. But bad work is reduced to a minimum in him and he is more even than his contemporaries. Even the most carping critics have acknowledged him a master of verse and paid flattering tributes to his poetic genius. He had no very high message to deliver but as a writer of modern verse he ranks very high and is one of the foremost poets of his age.

His position.

Nadir Ali Khan, poetically surnamed Nadir, was one of the enthusiastic supporters of the New School of poetry. He carried on the traditions of Azad and Sarur and wrote many remarkable pieces of poetry in the new style. His verses were characterized by genuine pathos, lofty thoughts and love of the motherland. He was a student of Byron and Thomas More and wanted to import Western ideals of poetry in Urdu by writing simply and eloquently. Some of his remarkable poems are *Shama-o-Parwana* (Candle and the Moth), *Shua-i-Ummeed* (Ray of Hope), *Paikar-i-Bezaban* (Tongueless Form) and *Filsafa-i-Shairi* or Philosophy of Poetry. He had a burning love for India and wrote some poignantly touching verses such as *Muqaddas Sar Zamin* (Holy Land) and *Madar-i-Hind* or Mother India. Besides this he is the author of a masnavi entitled *Lala Rukh*. He died early at the age of 45 in 1912 A. D. and did not thus fulfil the promise that he had given by his simple, eloquent and charming verses full of fire and emotion.

Nadir.

Akbar was one of the greatest personalities of his age. He was a founder of a new kind of poetry and in his sphere he reigned supreme. He was inimitable and unapproachable in his art. He was a poet of a very high order, a moralist and satirist of great eminence, a sufi and a spiritualist, a writer of delightful letters, a critic of literature, society and administration and a wit and humorist of brilliance and conspicuous merit.

Akbar: 1846-1921 A. D.

Syed Akbar Husain Rizvi was born on 16th November, 1847 A. D. of parents not in affluent circumstances. He received early education in madrasas and Government Schools. In 1866 A. D. he passed the Pleader's Examination in the lower grade and was appointed a Naib Tahsildar. In 1870 A. D. he was taken up in High Court as a *Misal Khwan*. In 1872 A. D. he passed the Pleader's Examination in the Higher Standard and set up as a pleader till 1880 A. D. when he again commenced Government service as a Munsiff. In 1888 A. D. he became a Subordinate Judge and in 1894 A. D. he rose to the post of a

His life.

Small Causes Court Judge. He retired, having been honoured by the Government with the title of Khan Bahadur. He was also a Fellow of the Allahabad University. He lived a life of lettered leisure and composed copiously on all subjects. He died in September, 1921 A. D., deeply mourned by all.

As a man.

As a man Akbar was very genial and gregarious. He had always a laugh, a joke or a witty remark on his lips. He was the life of the society in which he moved. He was exceedingly entertaining and had a fund of witty and humorous anecdotes with which he regaled his companions. He had grand manners, courtesy, sincerity, sympathy and hospitality. He however lacked the courage of his conviction and had not moral courage in the same degree as was demanded by a man of his personality and position. Often he would invoke the help of 'policy'. His letters to his various friends, Hasan Nizami, Aziz Lucknavi, Daya Narain Nigam, Ahsan Maraharwi and others reveal the true man. He often did things which were not expected of him because he did not want to embarrass his position and that of others. He was a Sunni but he had no antipathy for Shias. He was a staunch Mohammadan but he had no intolerance and bigotry. The serenity of his later life was marred by ill-health and sad bereavements. He lost his wife and his dearly beloved son Hashim who was an inspirer of his muse. Akbar was a born poet and had considerable practice. He showed early signs of genius. He wrote verses when he was very young. He submitted his poems for correction to Ghulam Hussain Waheed, a pupil of Atish. In his youth he had learned deeply and widely of Persian and Arabic and the knowledge stood him in great stead. During his official career he studied English and attained to a considerable proficiency. Akbar's poetical career extended over a long period. He himself divided it into five periods.

The poetical career of Akbar.

First period—1866 A.D.

The first period is from early boyhood to 1866 A. D. and is the period of his early compositions. He is mainly a ghazal-writer. The ghazals are all written *a la mode*. This is the period of his apprenticeship. He writes after the approved style of Lucknow schools or Durbari poets. His muse is attempting its first flights. The ghazals are those which were recited in mushairas. They are orthodox compositions treating of subjects forming the stock in trade of poets and which were applauded in such assemblies. His early verses though occasionally treating of dissipation and sensual love are marked by beauty and grace, elegance of diction and spontaneity. They show great promise though artificiality is not absent.

Second period—1866 to 1884 A. D.

The second period extends from 1866 to 1884 A. D. Emotion has more play. Sincerity is more often requisitioned. There is a distinct note of genuineness in verses. There is more polish and refinement. The touch is more certain. Commonplace themes such as were in vogue are diminishing though not utterly discarded. Artificiality is giving place to reality. Personality is breaking the firm bonds of conventionality. The muse is casting off its swaddling clothes The poetry is emerging from its chrysalis stage. Ghazals still engage his minds. There is a distinct advance in art, feeling, style and diction.

Third period—1884-1908 A. D.

The third stage from 1885-1908 A. D. marks a still greater progress. The poet has now a perfect mastery. He does not grope or falter but advances with confidence. He writes with the skill and ease of a great Ustad The period of experiment and apprenticeship is long over. There is no hesitation, no wobbling. Ghazals still predominate Humour and wit are dominating his compositions and bid fair to achieve a great triumph. Satire has made its appearance. Ghazals have discarded the shell of libertinism, sensuality and conventionality. They have now an ethical note. Greater attention is paid to inventiveness and humour. Morality and spirituality are marked and outstanding features of his composition. But the ghazals have not ceased to be ghazals in character spirit and language, nor do they flagrantly outrage the principles and canons laid down for ghazals. The verses of these periods have been included in Kuliyat Awwal (First) and Doyam (Second).

The fourth period 1909 to 1912 A. D.

The fourth period from 1909 to 1912 A. D. sees a great advance is the direction in which Akbar was proceeding. It is not essentially different from the last one. It is in fact the fulfilment of the previous period. Akbar is fast becoming the '*Lisanul Asr*' the mouthpiece of his age. Ghazals in the real sense of the word are losing his hold on him. He is growing more philosophical in his utterances. He is still seeking the aid of humour, wit and satire to express his opinions and to expound his views on current topics and western civilization. Wit and humour are not held in leash but given full play. There is a great number of ethical, spiritual, philosophical and political poems of this period. The erotic element has not altogether disappeared. The whisper of love has not been silenced though it is frequently drowned by the roar of politics. Akbar is now a perfect master of his craft. His genius has ripened. The flow has not exhausted itself. Ideas abound. Inventiveness has not been crushed by the skill in verse-technique. Fresh nooks are searched and explored.

Quaint and attractive rhymes and double rhymes are not more frequently employed. New similes are commandeered. Sufism and spirituality are tightening their grip. The garb is still that of humour and wit.

The fifth period — 1912 to 1921 A. D.

The fifth period may be said to extend from 1912 to 1921 A. D. Some of his verses have been published in Kuliyat Soyam or Third Dewan. Erotic element has been reduced to a minimum. The poems are mostly political, ethical, spiritual or humorous in character. They mark the triumph of Akbar's genius. It is true that there is not that elasticity, buoyancy and exhilaration as in the foregoing periods. Akbar has grown more philosophical, has imbibed deeply of sufism and has grown extremely wise. Life has a meaning for him. He has turned into a thorough-paced sufi. His verses are his maxims serving as vehicles for carrying some lesson or rule of conduct for the present times. Akbar during this period wrote copiously. It was a most fertile period and he has left verses which could be enough for two more Kuliyats. He also wrote verses which were kept confidential and were never meant for publication because either they were extreme in views or indecorous in character. Before his death he wrote *Gandhi Namah* which is in verse the history of the non-cooperation movement. In his political wisdom he did not think it safe and advisable to publish them so as not to compromise himself or embarrass others.

His published works.

His published works comprise of three Kuliyats. Two were published in Akbar's lifetime and the third one was published by his son after his death. It is expected that one more Kuliyat would be published.

His letters.

Akbar was a prolific writer of letters. He had numerous correspondents to whom he wrote frequently and copiously. His letters to Hasan Nizami of Delhi, Daya Narain Nigam, Ahsan Maraharwi and Aziz Lucknavi have been published. They reveal the real man and his life's history could be constructed from the materials supplied by the letters. The letters are delightful and have the merit of epigrammatic beauty but they could not be said to possess the same charm, elegance and breeziness as those of Ghalib.

His prose.

Akbar was not a prose writer and has left no work in prose except his letters and his contributions to the Oudh Punch and other magazines of the time His articles are readable. The Oudh Punch served as an excellent training ground for his humour.

His ghazals.

Akbar's ghazals are characterized by beauty of diction, every day idioms, flow, flight of fancy, sincerity, spontaneity, quaint rhymes and piquant

similes. The ephemeral character of the world, the instability of human grandeur, the transitoriness of the pleasures of the world and the bitter sting that those pleasures leave behind have fitly been sung by him. Pathos, sorrow, and despair also came in for their share. Akbar's fame does not however rest on his ghazals. Though admirable in themselves, they only reveal a facet of his versatile genius.

Akbar's wit and humour.

Akbar is chiefly known by his wit, humour and sarcasm stringed in golden verses. He had served his period of probation in Oudh Punch. He had however soon outgrown the conventional type of humour not very subtle and refined as found in its pages. Akbar was largely endowed with this beautiful gift at his birth. The times in which he lived, the conditions of the society in which he moved helped him to cultivate it with success. It furnished a new sphere for his inventive genius and he readily annexed it for his special use. He attained to a very high degree of excellence and his mediocre imitators found a very high standard in him, and a very difficult model in his verses. He united in himself the humour of a born humorist and the skill of a practised poet. The third period marks a triumph of his powers when he wrote with force and skill and composed witty verses for the sake of wit alone. With the advance in life he ceased to be purely and utterly humorous. His strength declined but he retained the control even to his last days wonderfully well. Wit and humour were not indulged for their own sake. They began to be used as a cloak to disguise some truth political or spiritual. Humour was a means to an end not an end itself. Instead of having toyed as a mistress it was utilized as a slave though with courtesy and consideration. Purely humorous verses diminished as Akbar advanced in age.

Ingredients of Akbar's wit and humour.

The following are the chief ingredients of Akbar's humour and wit. Quaint and fresh similes are picked from common observation; they are not far-fetched but taken up from near surroundings and invested with a new meaning. New peculiar rhymes and double rhymes are culled from Hindi, English and Urdu. The use of old words in novel senses, undreamt of before, contribute to the effect. It it also achieved by the use of commonplace and debased words which were despised and which formed no part of poetical vocabulary, by investing them with new grace, charm, and meaning. A new vocabulary is created in which words have peculiar meaning. The names of Kallu, Sallu, Piru, Buddhu, Nasiban and Jumman stand for various meanings and are adroitly used with effect in his verses. Ordinary words which are too humble and low to be used in poetry, such as Gitpit (confused talk in English), Faltu (unnecessary) are fittingly and creditably

used to heighten the effect of the verse. Even bazar idioms which are not current coin and may sound indecorous to orthodox ears are skillfully woven. Words having the same sense, bearing on the same meaning and appropriate to the subject such as in the school of Nasikh but with a different object, are employed. There is a play on the meaning of the word either in English, Hindi or Urdu. Sometimes such words are of English origin and have not gained *entree* or currency in Urdu-speaking world. Words are clipped to yield different and various meanings. Fanciful meanings are woven round words. Ingenuity is the hall-mark of such verses. There is no emotional value. Cleverness and adroitness are to be admired. Dexterity is the most outstanding feature. Beauty and grace lie in their construction. The tricks and quips are indulged to provoke a laughter or evoke a smile.

Akbar's humour and its province.

Akbar's humour is not buffoonery. It is subtle and refined, with the golden thread of sound sense running in it. It is an exposition of some truth, ethical, social, educational, cultural, moral, political, or spiritual. Words and sense are so well commingled that they form a harmonious whole. The preaching is never dry; the jokes are never flippant. The words are wedded to the sense. The sphere of humour is very wide and extensive. It is no respector of persons or positions. Current topics and politics are its special departments. Western civilization and its progress in India furnish innumerable subjects for its hits. Social evils, educational and religious shortcomings are its butts. Its targets are rich and poor, lettered and unlettered Englishmen, Indians and Turks, Hindus and Mohammadans, Sunnis and Shias. Politics however engrossed his attention and some of his utterances though ostensibly very frivolous and flippant are masks for some great bitter truth and trenchantly unpalatable criticism. They are veiled home-thrusts. He has also topical verses, hence the universal appeal in his compositions.

Akbar's special vocabulary.

Akbar had a special vocabulary of his own. Miss, Sheikh, Syed Saheb, Camel, Cow, Cathedral, Mosque, Temple, Idol, College, Brahman, Lala and such other words had special significance in his verses. Miss stands for the attractiveness and alluring character of western civilization. Sheikh is the orthodox Mohammadan adorned with the outward emblem of Musulman and Quranic culture but untouched by its spirit. Syed Saheb is either a direct allusion to Sir Syed who had all engrossing love for western institutions and educations or refers to the supporters of Aligarh movement. Camel carries us back to the times in Arabia and to the Muslim's brilliant past. Cow refers to the question of Hindu-Muslim Unity.

His so-called political verses are of two kinds. To the first kind belong all those which are frankly frivolous. They are jokes first and every other thing afterwards. A witty thought is presented in suitable language for the sake of wit. The only aim is to elicit laughter. To the second kind belong those verses which contain political truths which expound his views and which express his indignation and condemnation. Wit and humour, sarcasm and irony are not let slipped from hand but their aid is sought to sugar the pill, soften the harshness, and cloak the meaning. To the uninitiated the joke appeals and he laughs; to the man familiar with Akbar's thought and expression it is fraught with meaning. He dives deep and picks up the pearl of some truth. Both enjoy, and hence the universality of his appeal. In politics he points to the real character of the institutions of the west. They are all snares set up to trap the spirituality of Indians. Political rights are links forged to strengthen the chain of servitude. They are baits to catch the unwary. Government schools are the workshops to manufacture clerks and to perpetuate slavery. They rivet the bonds tighter and tighter. The Criminal Investigation Department is 'infallible' and can never err and so Akbar has employed it to search the long lost 'waist' of the beloved. He has a report ready to the oft repeated charge of Europeans about Islam that it was preached at the point of the sword. He counters by saying that Europe has employed the gun and the whole paraphernalia of western institutions to seize money and to reduce people into eternal servitude. These verses need not be taken to mean Akbar's own opinions. Akbar was not a politician in any sense. He had not studied the science as a student. He had served the British Government long and meritoriously in various capacities. He was a Government pensioner and had the title of Khan Bahadur. By his poetry he was a privileged person. He could string a thought in verse and it does not matter whether the thought was his property or the property of others. It was the fancy that mattered. Akbar sometimes wrote for and sometimes against the Government simply because he was a poet who saw humour in the situation and turned it into the gold of his verse. His opinions as found in the verses are not the considered opinions of a thoughtful man. There is much inconsistency. Akbar was extremely cautious by nature and did not like to hazard an opinion which would land him into trouble. He is a poet first and everything afterwards. His function was to please first and voice the sentiments afterwards. He seizes the weak point of any camp and sings it in his verses, in a terse epigrammatic and humorous way. Sometimes he praises the laudable efforts of the Mohammadans to acquire western learning, at others he condemns them as leading to agnosticism and

His 'political verses'.

disregard of religion. His verses should not be taken too seriously. He is a privileged joker and jokes with the freedom of a licensed jester. He has topical humorous verses. He does not propound problems but hits off with a few epigrammatic verses. It is true that some of his verses have great subtlety about them. They yield tons of meaning when wrung to do so. In their implications they connote things not ordinarily visible to the casual reader. The solution of the political ills according to Akbar was to acquire strength. Beggary and cringing, crying and fretting were useless and of no avail. It was a frittering of energy and a sign of weakness. He has adroitly hinted at many of the activities of the Congress, the weaknesses of the extremists' camp and the shortcomings of the bureaucratic rule. These reflections are thickly veiled in quaint similes and provoking metaphors. To the casual reader they supply a fund of merriment on current topics ; to the wise they expound a truth. His verses have in them ' more than what meets the ear '. His recondite meaning, his inuendoes, his veiled sarcasm and his thickly cloaked contempt did not always escape notice and the Government had to warn Akbar during the Great War and Cawnpore Mosque riot to be careful of what he composed and published. His verses wielded great influence and were on the lips of everybody. They were intelligible to the merest villager as to the most refined townsman, to the veriest illiterate as to the most learned. Each drew meaning according to his ability. They made a universal appeal. The bounds of Urdu and Hindi vanished in him and the purist of Hindi read and admired him to the same extent as the lover of Persianized Urdu. In the sphere of politics and morality Akbar assumes the role of a national poet. He animadverts his own people for losing sight of national culture and national ideals and falling a willing victim to the snare of foreign institutions. Akbar however is an optimist and believes in the ultimate victory of spiritualism over materialism. The cure for political ills, he thought, was devotion to God and implicit belief in His Providence.

Akbar as a satirist of society.

Akbar was born when India was in the throes of a new birth. The wine of western learning went into the head of Indians and destroyed their mental equipoise. A great change swept over the great country. Western civilization with all its glamour attracted the eye and affected the head. Indians were thoroughly Europeanised. Such anglicised Indians made a special point to despise indigenous culture and old ideals. They treated with contempt everything that was Indian. European names, dresses and food were adopted. English style of living was preferred. English speech was considered a mark of high culture. Everything European was thought to be superior. The conquerors had thoroughly vanquished the conquered. A spirit of irreverence

and iconoclasm pervaded. Indian things and culture were the heritage of slavery. Everything that bore the hall-mark of Europe was welcomed blindly. At last men of foresight became aware of the impending danger and heralded a note of caution. They cried halt. They saw rocks ahead. Bengal was the greatest sufferer. The conservation found a champion and a hero in Bankim Chandra Chatterji who satirised the anglicised Babu in his powerful and entertaining novels. Downright scathing criticism would not have been so effective. Trenchant sarcasm could achieve much and was made use of by Bankim Babu and Akbar. The follies are laughed at, the mannerisms and the vanities are ridiculed. The method is that of '*Reductio ad absurdum*' in both. Akbar however occasionally overshot himself and missed the mark. He maintained no sense of proportion and often wanted to tear out western civilization root and branch. He failed to move with the times and frequently refused to believe in the lasting influence of occidental culture in India. Hence his extreme conservatism did not carry all his listeners with him and consequently his reputation as a poet suffered partially.

In the new spirit, born of the impact from western culture, Sir Syed saw a powerful lever to lift up his inert coreligionists. Akbar saw the evils attendant on the whole sale adoption of all that the new civilization stood for. He himself erred because he wished to reject it *in toto*. It was impossible to stem the flow wholly. Akbar objected to the scheme of modern education which neglected the religious side of it and turned students into agnostics and irreverent scoffers. He also opposed the relaxation and the abolition of the *Purdah* which he thought would be a great mischief. He was alive to the evil of the sudden freedom of the sex which was a growing danger in Europe. He trembled to see the mischief that would arise in the sudden promiscuous intercourse between men and women of India. He thought that Eastern and Western cultures were poles apart in their ideals. The conditions, ideals, circumstances and traditions were quite different. The solutions for the ills of Europe were not to be made applicable for ills of India and the East. Each has a genius of its own and has to work out its solution on its own lines. He opposes the education of girls in Western learning as he thinks that it would undermine their morals. The relaxation of the *Purdah* would be dangerous and expose them to the gaze of strangers. Westernization is extremely lashed and scathingly condemned. Indian lovers according to him seek to model themselves on their European prototypes. Indian sweethearts have gone to take lessons in witchery and blandishments from their European sisters. Committees and subscriptions are the orders of the day. There has been a complete revolution in the morals and sentiments of men and

women. Old cultural and national ideals have been lost sight of or consciously relegated to the limbo of the past. The scholars and the divines no longer believe in plain living and high thinking. They seek for self-advertisement and parade their knowledge. Sufis are merely sellers of piety. *'Ulemas* are no longer the leaders of learning. Women are not the presiding deities of household but delight in being regarded as ornaments of assemblies. Materialism reigns supreme. Self-respect is thrown overboard and flattery is the chief weapon of self-advancement. The new system presages no good. It was his extreme conservatism that led him to have his flings at Sir Syed and the leaders of Aligarh movement. The pendulum swung far too back. Often this wholesale condemnation is a pose adopted for the purposes of poetry.

Akbar not only condemns the importation of new fangled ideas but mourns the decay of national culture and civilization. He wanted to lay stress on purity of morals, on revival of Muslim culture and on purging of evils that have crept in oriental civilization. He is not thoroughly opposed to the education of girls but wishes it to be on right lines. He aims at the manufacture of a good housewife and a good mother but not a good citizen. He bewails the loss of old world courtesy, contentment, sincerity, sympathy and fellow-feeling. He is indignant at the growing rise of selfishness, duplicity and 'policy' which are according to him the special products of the new age. He deplores that in the blind rush for self-advancement claims of parents, sisters and other dependents are utterly neglected. Even the Creator is shelved and ignored. The present world is all-absorbing and the world to come is utterly neglected. The materialistic age which has faith only in rapid motion, rushing railways and experimental philosophy has not brought happiness. The scientific improvement and the mechanical convenience of the modern civilization have not been altogether beneficial. Accidental deaths due to blind fury of rushing about, shortening of life, love of sensation and excitement, ruin of health are some of the results. The modern system of education has not proved a panacea as was thought. The advancement of science and the conquest of Nature has not given solace to the aches of heart. It has not alleviated human miseries to the extent it promised. There is a vast gulf yawning between the ideals of the two civilizations. The western cares for worldly prosperity and material progress, the eastern cares for spiritual advancement. The western is caught with the fever of commerce and hankers for wealth. The eastern is easily satisfied, has no lust of conquest, is contented and resigned.

Akbar's religious beliefs.

As a satirist Akbar also combined in himself the function of a moralist, reformer, teacher and philosopher. He believed in the unity of God and in the

efficacy of prayer. He believed religion to be a matter of faith, transcending all philosophy, science and logic. He rises superior to religious dissensions and paltry prejudices. Religion is a living thing to him and is a thing to be lived. It is not a bundle of philosophic truths and opinions. Akbar does not permit fault finding which destroys love, the essence of religion. He has no intolerance and condemns the narrowness of the beliefs of the *Mulla*. He believes that petty differences between Islam and heathenism are immaterial to a broad-minded deist. Again and again Akbar reminds the littleness of the puny man to prevent him from inflating himself for his achievements. He exhorts people not to forget the existence of God in the triumphs of science over Nature.

Akbar as a teacher, a philosopher and a sufi.

Akbar was not merely a preacher and a reformer but he was a real teacher and propounded the principles of morality and philosophic truths. Externals of religion are nothing to him. What is really wanted is the discipline of the soul and perfect control over the senses. A change in religious beliefs need not mean a change in social habits. A Christian need not ape Europeans in manners. Rites and rituals are mere husks. Conduct, principles, and acts are kernels. He teaches people not to be intolerant and angry as intolerance and anger are born of narrowness. A width of vision and higher standpoint would remove these evils. Akbar has written some very philosophic verses. His later utterances range themselves in this category. At one place he has beautifully expounded the theory of recompense in the world. Akbar became a great sufi towards the end of his life. He had deep attachment for Hasan Nizami owing to kindred interest. Many of his verses bear the imprint of sufism. They are the cream of his poems.

Akbar's style and importance.

Akbar was a great thinker and a great humorist. He had an inimitable style of his own. He has perfect mastery of verse and had a wonderful command over language. He is a finished artist. He combines the greatness and sublimity of thought with beautiful language. His verses have fun, grace, charm, nerve and piquancy. They are thought-laden. No poet was ever so popular. He has obliterated the difference of Hindi and Urdu in his verses. They are understood by all and appreciated by all. Most of his verses are household words and are on the lips of everybody.

Akbar's position.

Akbar's position is unique. As a great wit and humorist, a writer of topical verses, a great satirist and reformer, a moralist and a teacher, a poet, philosopher and a sufi, a popular singer, and a writer of letters

Akbar occupies a forefront seat amongst the worthies of Urdu literature.

Nadir, died 1912 A. D.

Nadir Ali Khan, poetically surnamed Nadir, was one of the enthusiastic supporters of the New School of poetry. He carried on the traditions of Azad and Sarur and wrote many remarkable pieces of poetry in the new style. His verses were characterized by genuine pathos, lofty thoughts and love of the motherland. He was a student of Byron and Thomas More and wanted to import Western ideals of poetry in Urdu by writing simply and eloquently. Some of his remarkable poems are *Shama-o-Parwana* (Candle and Moth), *Shua-i-Ummeed* (Ray of Hope), *Paikar-i-Bezaban* (Tongueless Form) and *Filsafa-i-Shairi* or Philosophy of Poetry. He had a burning love for India and wrote some poignantly touching verses such as *Muqaddas Sar Zamin* (Holy Land) and *Madar-i-Hind* or Mother India. Besides this he is the author of a masnavi entitled *Lala Rukh*. He died early at the age of 45 in 1912 A. D. and did not thus fulfil the promise that he had given by his simple, eloquent and charming verses full of fire and emotion.

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CHAPTER XV.

URDU PROSE

ITS BIRTH AND GROWTH

Fort William College at Calcutta.

Urdu Prose for practical purposes was ushered into existence in Fort William College at Calcutta. Urdu Prose was not developed in the North for Persian was the order of the day and was the language of the court and culture. Correspondence was carried on in Persian. Exordia and prefaces, eulogistic notices and reviews of Urdu books appended at their end were written in Persian. Tazkiras of Urdu poets, giving biographical accounts of them were couched in Persian. Rhymes, double rhymes, balanced structures and carefully prepared antithesis reigned supreme even when Urdu prose was attempted. The prose of Zahuri and Bedil was looked upon as a mode of elegant style. Urdu prose writers rivalled one another in jugglery and clever performances. The divisions of Prose into *Nasr Murassa*, *Nasr Musajjah* and *Nasr Ari* were adopted without demur and whenever the services of prose were requisitioned it was always the ornate and highly embellished prose that was gleefully indulged in. Poetry was generally practised; even letters were written in rhyming verses. To be able to versify was a mark of scholarship and distinction. It was a necessary accomplishment of a man of letters. Prose was woefully neglected or masqueraded in the brocade garb of poetry. It humbly waited for its turn; it was too poor to attract attention, just yet. The age was the age of poetry. Urdu poets were Persian scholars. Urdu prose was thus held in abeyance and took a start from a more remote and business-like centre.

The lateness of Urdu Prose.

Antiquarians and research scholars of note have delved into the past and unearthed many remarkable pieces of Dakhini prose. The process of discovery is going on and it is expected that at some future date when sufficient material is gathered, a comprehensive history of early Urdu prose will be reconstructed from definite and reliable data. At present the finds are few. The work of Moulvi Abdul Haq and Hakim Syed Shamsulla Qadri is remarkable and worthy of praise. As far as the earliest specimens are available the history of early Urdu prose commences from the eighth century A. H. These specimens are all pamphlets containing saws, maxims and sayings of sufis, saints, eminent divines and *Fakirs* of the Deccan and Gujrat. These pamphlets are occasionally translations and invariably religious in character. The books of Shaikh Ainuddin

Early Urdu Prose in the Deccan.

Ganjul Islam (d. 795 A. H.) which treat of religious problems and duties, and *Meraj-ul-Ashqin* (a translation of *Nishat-ul-Ishq* and which has been published after corrections by Moulvi Abdul Haq with a learned introduction) by Khwaja Banda Nawaz Hazrat Syed Gesu Daraz although not literary in the accepted sense of the word afford interesting glimpses of the language of the period. Shah Miranji Shams-ul-Ushshaq of Bijapur who was a famous saint and sufi wrote numerous small treatises in prose and they all deal with sufistic problems and are illustrated with parables and stories. Two of them are named *Jal Tarang* and *Gul Bas*. Moulana Wajhai wrote *Sabras* about 1045 A. H. which has already been described. Miran Yakub translated *Shamail-ul-Inqiad Dalayal-ul-Itiqa* into easy, simple and flowing Dakhini about 1085 A. H. Syed Shah Mohammad Qadri of Naur Darya family of Raichur (Deccan) who flourished during the time of Aurangzeb wrote many religious pamphlets. In the 11th century A. H. Syed Shah Mir also wrote a religious book in Dakhini entitled *Isar-ut-Tauhid*.

Dah Masjis of Fazli, 1732 A. D.

Before the advent of prose from this distant nursery, there were a few books in prose, but they were mostly romances of religious books translated from Persian, or Sanskrit through Persian. The earliest specimen of note of Urdu prose is *Dah Majlis* written by one Fazli in 1145 A. H. or 1732 A. D. in the reign of Mohammad Shah. The author, who was twenty-two years of age when he compiled the book has given an account in the introduction of how the book came to be written. It is a translation of Persian book entitled *Rauzat-ush-Shauhda* or 'The Garden of the Martyrs.' Fazli, in order to gain merit, wanted to write the book in an easy language in the idiom then prevalent, but felt diffident as it was a sacred task and having no model to guide him as no book on Urdu prose existed at that time. He was however fortified in his resolve by a dream which he had one night in which the Prince of Martyrs appeared and inspired him, the story of which he relates with great enthusiasm and minuteness of detail. Fazli who was a Shiah has also written many invocatory poems and Marsias but they are not of any poetic merit. *Dah Majlis* which comprises of twelve 'Majlises' and an epilogue is in no sense an 'inspired' book. Its only value is that it furnishes the earliest specimens of any note of Urdu prose now extant. The style is crude and immature. There are involved sentences with a distinct effort to balance and rhyme words. The jingling words taken out from their position to the end of the sentence may sound pleasant but mar the sense. A very short specimen of Urdu prose of Sauda is available in the preface to his Urdu Diwan and it shows the trend of times, the order of words in the sentence not conforming to canons of grammar but arranged to evoke harmony

and rhyming sound like verses. There is a plethora of imageries and metaphors. Such prose can only be called so by courtesy. It is really verse without any attention to regular metre. The *Darya-i-Latafat* of Insha and Qateel though written in Persian is also very interesting as it furnishes specimens of the language as employed by various classes of people. It throws a flood of light on the manners and customs of people and the language they used in their conversation. It also registers the changes which Urdu underwent and appraises the influence which various dialects exercised on it. To Urdu prose, the specimens of conversation embodied in the book are interesting as affording an insight into the spoken language of the time but the specimens alone could not be sufficient to raise it to the rank of a book of Urdu prose.

Nau-Tarzi Murassa, 1798 A. D.

The next in importance is ***Nau-Tarzi Murassa*** or the New Gold-embroidered Fashion, a translation by Mir Mahomed Hussain Ata Khan poetically surnamed Tahsin of the *Qissah-i-Chahar Durwesh* or the tale of Four Mendicants of Amir Khusru. It was completed in 1798 A. D. in the time of Nawab Shujjauddaula of Oudh in whose praise there is a laudatory ode at the conclusion of the preface. The translator Mahomed Hussain Ata Khan of Etawah whose *nom de poete* was Tahsin and who had the soubriquet of Murassa Raqam (an ornate pen-man) was the son of Mohammad Baqir Khan poetically entitled 'Shauq' and lived at the court of Abu Mansur Alikhan Safdar Jung. He was a munshi in the service of General Smith and accompanied him to Calcutta. On his departure from India, Tahsin went to Patna, qualified himself as a lawyer and practised as a civil court pleader. On the death of his father he left Patna and settled at Faizabad. He entered the service of Nawab Shujjauddaula and continued to enjoy the favours of his successor Nawab Asaf-ud-daula. Tahsin was a good calligraphist as his title of 'Murassa Raqam' shows. He was also an Insha-writer of some note. He is the author of *Zawabit Angrezi* (English Regulations) and *Tawarikh Qasmi*, a book on history. Both these are in Persian. The style of *Nau-Tarzi Murassa* is highly ornate replete with learned words of foreign extraction. Consequently it led to another translation by Mir Amman of Delhi at the instance of Doctor Gilchrist which marks an era in the rise of Urdu prose.

Why Urdu Prose takes its start from the Fort William College at Calcutta.

The English acquired vast tracts in the wake of their mercantile operations. It was highly necessary for them to have their men trained in the language of the country, not only for their purposes of trade which was fading into insignificance but also for administrative reasons. Interpreters had outlived their use and to carry on the management of their possessions under

their control efficiently on sound lines, was essential for their revenue and exchequer. They could not very well govern an alien people without knowing their language, their customs and their traditions. To understand those whom they were called upon to govern needed a knowledge of the language on their part. The Court of Directors realising how inefficiently their various '*employēs*' in India must perform their duties without a knowledge of the language of the people sent positive instructions to local authorities to insist on a high degree of proficiency in the language of the country. The vast territories which they had acquired engendered a sense of responsibility for the people of India which was constantly urged by many in the Parliament. Efforts were made to diffuse knowledge and revive learning which was being crushed in the turmoil of internecine warfare and wars for supremacy. The study of English stimulated thought and revolutionised the old order of things in vernacular literature. It was responsible in the north for the new movement in Urdu poetry. In the far-off West it led to the creation of a serviceable prose for everyday use. The advent of English did for India what the Renaissance did for Europe. Evils must of necessity follow every change but the good resulting from them counterbalanced the disadvantages. The contact was, however, only fruitful in the case of vernaculars which being revived sped forth in their varied and useful careers.

Doctor John Gilchrist, the father of Urdu Prose. (1759-1841 A. D.)

Doctor John Gilchrist who was at the head of the Fort William College at Calcutta at the commencement of the 19th century has been fitly called the father of Urdu Prose. 'To his exertions we owe the elaborations of the vernacular as an official speech, and the possibility of substituting it for the previously current Persian as the language of the Court and the Government.'

Doctor John Borthwick Gilchrist was a Scotsman and was born in 1759 A. D. at Edinburgh. He was educated at George Heriot's Hospital in that city. In 1783 A. D. he went out as medical officer in the service of the East India Company. He was one of the few who realised that the British officers should not so much study the Persian as the vernaculars of the country chiefly Hindustani which was the most prevalent form of speech to get into touch with every section of people. Gilchrist himself led the way. " Clad in native garb, he travelled through those provinces where Hindustani was spoken in its greatest purity, and also acquired good knowledge of Sanscrit, Persian and other Eastern languages. His success inspired a new spirit in the Company's servants, and the study of Hindustani became most popular." Lord Wellesley recognising the importance of the scheme and the good work of Dr. Gilchrist, liberally aided him from the

Company's revenue and appointed him head of the Fort William College founded in 1800 A. D. to instruct British servants of the Company in the languages of the country. Gilchrist could not remain long but he resigned his post owing to ill-health in 1804 on a pension. So great was his love for Hindustani that after staying in Edinburgh till 1816 A. D. he "removed to London and undertook private tuition in Oriental languages to candidates for Indian services." In 1818 A. D. he accepted the Professorship of Hindustani at the Oriental Institute, Leicester Square, established in that year by the East India Company but closed in 1825. Gilchrist continued to hold classes privately for about a year when he handed them over to the orientalists, Sandford Arnot and Duncan Forbes. He died at the age of eighty-two in Paris in 1841 A. D.

Dr. Gilchrist is the author of many Hindustani works. A comprehensive list is given in Dr. Grierson's 'Linguistic Survey of Hindustan,' Volume IX. A few may be mentioned here:—

(1) A Dictionary, English and Hindustani, in two parts, published in 1796 A. D.

(2) Oriental Linguist, an Introduction to the Language of Hindustani in 1798 A. D.

(3) Hindustani Grammar, Calcutta, 1796.

(4) Hindustani Philology.

Under his able and sympathetic superintendence, a band of Indian scholars were gathered at the College who not only wrote text-books for the use of the fresh officers but also created a standard of prose for Urdu and Hindi. On the break-up of the Moghul Empire scholars had drifted from Delhi and the munificence and the fostering care of Doctor Gilchrist attracted at Calcutta scholars of note though not of the foremost rank. With the help of other European Officers of the College such as Captain Abraham Lockett, Professor J. W. Taylor, and Doctor Hunter, Doctor Gilchrist rendered a great service to the cause of Urdu. The chief authors at the College were Mir Amman, Afsos, Husseni, Lutf, Hyderi, Jawan, Lallulal, Nihalchand, Ikram Ali, Wala, Syed Mahomed Munir, Syed Bashir Ali Afsos and Madarilal Gujrati.

Mir Amman Delhvi.

Mir Amman Delhvi, poetically surnamed Lutf, was a native of Delhi whose ancestors were in positions of honour in the Moghul courts from the time of Humayun and enjoyed pensions and jagirs. On the decadence of the Moghul empire the soldiers of Ahmadshah Durrani looted Amman's ancestral house and Surajmal Jat confiscated the old jagirs. Feeling insecure, he set out from Delhi to Patna where he resided for a number of years. He then proceeded to Calcutta where he was employed as a tutor to the

younger brother of Nawab Dilawar Jung for a couple of years. He was then introduced by Mir Bahadur Ali to Doctor John Gilchrist at whose orders he translated the famous story of Four Durwishes which is better known by its chronogrammatic title of *Bagh-o-Bahar* (Garden and Spring), the original tale in Persian under the name of *Qissah-i-Chahar Durwish* or the tale of the Four Durwishes was composed by the celebrated Amir Khusru for the purpose of entertaining his friend and religious instructor Nizamuddin-i-Auliya during a fit of sickness. After a short while he recovered and uttered a blessing that he who hears this story will never be sick. This interesting tale has been very popular in Persian and with the translations of Tahsin and Amman, has enjoyed very wide celebrity having been translated into most of the principal vernaculars of India and some foreign languages. The work was completed in 1801 A. D. and is based on Tahsin's translation which was regarded objectionable by his retaining too much of the phraseology and idiom of Persian and Arabic. The work is written in extremely simple and elegant language and Amman has succeeded in attaining a plain and perspicuous style at the same time preserving the purity of idiom. The style and the language is very much extolled and with some Amman's prose ranks as high as Mir's poetry. In fact Sir Syed expressed himself to the same effect in his book *Asar-us-Sanadid*. The tale is not only interesting in itself but contains pictures of the manners and customs of the orientals. The preface contains an interesting history of origin of Urdu language which is extremely fragmentary and not quite correct. The *Bagh-o-Bahar* has been extremely popular with the Westerners and it still continues to be used as a text-book for examinations in Urdu. Besides *Bagh-o-Bahar*, Amman is also the author of *Ganjina-i-Khubi* (Treasure-house of Virtue) an imitation of Akhlaqi Muhasini of Husain Waiz Khashifi, produced in 1802 A. D. Karimuddin thinks that Mir Amman must have compiled a Diwan of Urdu ghazals which appears now to be lost. He was, however, not a pupil of any one in the art of poetry as Dr. Fallon who heard it from Mir Amman himself states in his tazkira.

Bagh-o-Bahar, 1801 A. D.

Mir Sher Ali Jaafri of Delhi, poetically surnamed Afsos (grief) was the son of Mir Muzaffar Ali Khan, a superintendent of the arsenal of Nawab Mir Kasim of Patna. He traced his descent from Imam Jaafar Sadiq. His ancestors originally lived at Khaff in Arabia. One of them Syed Badruddin came to India and settled at Narnaul near Agra. During the reign of Mahomed Shah, his father and uncle Syed Ghulam Ali Khan migrated to Delhi and took service in the arsenal of Nawab Umdutul Mulk Amir Khan and became his associates thus enjoying handsome salaries. Afsos was born at Delhi, the

Afsos, 1735-1809 A. D.

home of his adoption, about 1735 A. D. the Nawab died and the father of Afsos went to Patna and sought service with Nawab Mir Kasim as superintendent of arsenal and after him under Nawab Jafar Ali Khan, till his deposition in 1760 A. D. when he went to Lucknow and thence to Haiderabad where he eventually died. Afsos who had accompanied his father to Patna now repaired to Lucknow. He was poetically inclined from his childhood and the literary atmosphere of Lucknow and his associations gave a great impetus to his tastes and fostered his love for letters and poetry. He submitted his poetical compositions for correction to Mir Haidar Ali Hairan and some say also to Mir Hassan, Mir Taqi and Mir Soz. Afsos was supported in Lucknow by Nawab Salar Jung and then by his son Mirza Nawazish Ali Khan. Afterwards he was taken in hand by Mirza Jawan Bakht Jahandar Shah but on his return to Delhi Afsos became an associate of Nawab Sarfarazuddaulah. Afsos was brought to the notice of Colonel Scott by Mirza Hasan Raza Khan, the Naib of Nawab Asafuddaulah. Colonel Scott was struck with his scholarship and literary talents, and sent him to Calcutta on a salary of rupees two hundred, with rupees five hundred as travelling expenses. At Murshidabad, he met Mirza Ali Lutf, author of Gulshan-i-Hind. He became a prominent figure amongst the Munshis of the College of Fort William. He made a translation of Sadi's *Gulistan* in Urdu which he completed in 1799 A. D. under the chronogrammatic title of *Bagh-i-Urdu* and which was first printed in Calcutta in 1802 A. D. and is held in much esteem. Afsos was so engaged in the revision and publications of the *Nasr-i-Benazir* of Mir Bahadur Ali, of the *Mazheb Ishq* of Izzatullah, of the *Bahar-i-Danish* of Mohammad Ismail and in editing the poetical works of Sauda. In 1804 he commenced to compile his historical work, entitled *Araish-i-Mahfil* which contains a general description of Hindustan and its inhabitants, with a geographical account of its provinces and a concise history of the Hindu Kings up to the time of Muhammadan conquest. Various Persian histories have been laid into contribution but it is mainly based on the *Khulasat-ul-Tawarikh* of Munshi Sujan Rai of Patiala. Besides all these works which are of great excellence Afsos has left a Diwan which is much appreciated. He died in 1809 A. D.

Mir Bahadur Ali Hussaini.

Mir Bahadur Ali Hussaini, the details of whose life are not available, was Mir Munshi or Head Munshi of Hindustani at Fort William College at Calcutta. He has left no account of his early life and parentage in any of his works contrary to the established practice, nor is he noticed at length in contemporary tazkiras presumably because he wrote little or no verses of high order. He is the author of the following works :—

(1) *Akhlaq-i-Hindi* (Indian Morals) written about 1802 A. D. at the order of Doctor John Gilchrist. It is a Urdu translation of a Persian version of *Hitopdesh* entitled *Muffarah-ul-Qulub* (the Enlivener of Hearts) by Taj Muinuddin Maliki at the command of Shah Nasiruddin Haidar, Nawab of Behar. The *Hitopdesh* is a collection of Sanskrit tales popularly ascribed to one Vishnu Sharman. This Urdu translation is written in an easy and colloquial style and is very popular.

(2) *Nasr-i-Benazir* (Incomparable Prose or Prose of Benazir, Benazir being the name of the hero) which is a prose adaptation of the famous *Sihar-ul-Bayan*, the celebrated Masnavi of Mir Hasan. It was composed in 1802 A. D. and printed in 1803 A. D., two years before the publication of the original poem of Mir Hasan.

(3) *Gilchrist Urdu Risala*, an abstract of Gilchrist's Grammar, is a treatise on prosody and grammar of the Urdu language, printed in Calcutta in 1816 A. D.

(4) A translation of *Tarikh-i-Assam*, a history of Assam, by Wali Ahmad Shahabuddin Talish, compiled at the time of Aurangzeb. It contains an account of the expedition into Assam of Mir Jumla, the celebrated general of Aurangzeb in 1662. It was written in Urdu by Hussaini at the desire of Colebrooke.

(5) Hussaini also collaborated in the Urdu translations of 'Qissai Luqman' and the Quran.

Sayid Haider Bakhsh Haidiri, died about 1833 A. D.

Sayid Haidar Bakhsh of Delhi poetically entitled 'Haidiri' was the son of Syed Abdul Hasan of Delhi. His ancestors were of Najaf. His father accompanied by Lala Sukhdeo Rai left Delhi when Haidar Bakhsh was quite young and settled at Benares. When Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan Khalil, author of *Gulzar-i-Ibrahim*, was appointed Court Judge of Benares, in the time of Warren Hastings Abul Hasan entrusted his son Haidiri who had then attained to manhood to the Nawab's care in order that his son might obtain a complete literary training. Haidar Bakhsh was accordingly given an appointment under Kazi Abdul Rashid Khan. He also received religious education from Ghulam Hussain of Ghazipur one of the Moulvis attached to the Court of Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan Khalil. In 1800 A. D. hearing that the College at Calcutta was enrolling literary men as Munshis he composed a romance entitled *Qissah-i-Mihr-o-Mah* (a Urdu version of a Persian work) and submitted it to Dr. Gilchrist who forthwith appointed him as one of the Munshis of the College. Haidar Bakhsh was a prolific writer and he

has left a large number of works mostly translations from Persian.

(1) *Qissai Lailah-o-Majnun.* He is the author of *Qissai Lailah-o-Majnun* adopted from the celebrated Persian poem of Amir Khusru. It was written before he entered the service at Calcutta.

(2) *Tota Kahani* (or the Tales of a Parrot) translated in 1801 A. D. from the Persian *Tutinamah* of Muhammad Qadiri by order of Dr. Gilchrist. These tales were originally written in Sanskrit under the title of *Shuka Saptati* (or Seventy Tales of a Parrot). A Persian version consisting of fifty-two tales was composed by Ziyai Nakhshabi in 1330 A.D. under the title of *Tutinamah* from which a simplified and abridged version was made by Muhammad Qadiri in 1793-94 A.D., the number of tales being reduced to thirty-five. These tales like the Arthurian legends in England gained such popularity in India and were variously utilized. Translations have been made into various languages, foreign and indigenous in English by G. Small in 1875 A.D., in Bengali by Chandicharna of Serampur in 1806 A. D. under the title of *Tota-itihasa*, in Hindustani, by Amba Prasad Rasa; in Deccani verse by Ghausi and in Deccani prose by an unknown author, in Hindi from Sanskrit, by Bhairava Prasad; in Gujarati verse by Simala Bhatt and in Marathi prose by an unknown writer.

(3) A romance entitled *Araish-i-Mahfil* (Ornament of the Assembly) not to be confounded with the *Araish-i-Mahfil* of Afsos, is a free translation of the famous *Qissah-i-Hatim Tai*, the popular story of Hatim Tai. It was first printed in Calcutta in 1802 A. D. It has been translated into Bengali, Hindi and Gujarati and is extremely simple in style and very readable.

(4) *Tarikh-i-Nadiri*, a history of the Emperor Nadir Shah translated from the Persian of Mirza Muhammad Mahdi, in 1809-10 A.D.

(5) *Gul-i-Maghfarat* (Flower of Redemption), a history of Mohammadan martyrs, is an abridgment in prose and verse of the author's *Gulshan-i-Shehidan* which is a translation of the *Rauzat-ush-Shuhada* of Hussaini Vaiz Kashafi. It is also called 'Dah Majlis' and was composed and printed in Calcutta in 1812 A.D. It has also been translated into French.

(6) *Gulzar-i-Danish*, a romance translated from the *Bahar-i-Danish* of Shaikh Inayatullah containing stories descriptive of the craft and faithlessness of women.

(7) *Haft Paikar*—Haidiri is also the author of *Haft Paikar*, a masnavi on the same subject as the poem of Nizami, composed in 1805-1806 A.D.

(8) He has left a collection of marsias, a collection of more than 100 anecdotes, and a diwan of ghazals.

Haidiri died about 1823 A.D. as noticed by Sprenger in his Oudh Catalogue.

Kazim Ali Jawan

Kazim, poetically entitled 'Jawan', belonged originally to Delhi but migrated to Lucknow where he was living in 1784 A.D. as is mentioned in *Tazkira-i-Gulzar-i-Ibrahim* of Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan to whom he had sent specimen of his poetry at Benares. In 1800 A.D. he was sent to Calcutta by Colonel Scott from Lucknow and was appointed one of the Munshis at the College. He was mentioned as alive in the *Diwan-i-Jahan*, a biographical account of Urdu poets by Beni Narayan composed in 1812 A.D. He seems to have taken part in the poetical contests held at the College of Fort William at Calcutta in 1815 A.D. He must have died some time after that date. Kazim Ali Jawan is the author of

(1) An Urdu adaptation of the famous *Sakuntala Natak* of Kalidas. In the preface of the work entitled 'Sakuntala Natak' Jawan states that this famous drama of the Sanskrit poet Kalidas had been translated into Brij Bhasha in 1716 A.D. by one Nawaz Kabishwar or poet Nawaz by order of Muley Khan, the son of Fida Khan, one of the generals of the Emperor Furrukh Siyyar (1713-1719 A.D.) and that by order of Dr. Gilchrist he had made this translation from the Brij Bhasha version of the drama into modern Urdu in 1801 A.D. It was revised with the aid of Lallu Lalji Kavi, a Pandit of Fort William College and published in 1802 A.D.

(2) A translation of the Quran into Urdu, the work having been revised by Dr. Gilchrist.

(3) A history of the Bahmani dynasty of the Deccan after the manner of Ferishta.

(4) *Singhasan Battisi*, with the help and collaboration of Lallu Lalji.

(5) *Barah Masa*, a masnavi containing descriptions of each month of year with accounts of various Hindu and Mohammadan festivals entitled *Dastur-i-Hind* or Usages of India. It was printed in 1812 A.D. at Calcutta and was written after the translation of *Sakuntala Natak*. This form of composition is much indulged in by people who used to sing it to the accompaniment of instruments.

Jawan has also made selections from *Khirad Afroz* and works of Sauda.

His sons Ayan and Mumtaz also attained some celebrity.

Nihalchand.

Nihalchand was born at Delhi but he is called Lahori or of Lahore as he spent much time there. He went to Calcutta in 1217 A. H. (1802 A. D.) No account of Nihalchand is available except the few lines that he himself wrote in the preface of *Mazhab-i-Ishq*. He states that he was introduced to Dr. Gilchrist by Captain Velvert to whom he was known from before and it was at the direction of Dr. Gilchrist that he rendered the tale of *Taj-ul-Muluk* and *Bakawali*, which was in Persian, in Urdu. He is the author of

(1) *Mazhab-i-Ishq* or Religion of Love, an adaptation of a masnavi entitled *Gul-i-Bakawali* rendered into Persian verse by Sheikh Uzmatullah Bengali in 1122 A. H. (1710 A. D.). There is another translation under the name of *Khayaban* (Parterre). It contains the story of the Rose of Bakawali in Urdu verse composed in 1212 A. H. (1797 A. D.) by one Rahyan, divided into forty chapters called 'Gulgashni'. This legend has been much handled. There is an older poetical Urdu version of this story which has the title of *Tauhfa-i-Majlis* (Present for the Assembly of Kings). The title is a chronogram for 1151 A. H. (1738 A. D.). There is a still much older Dakhini version of the story 130 pages long, which was composed in 1035 A. H. (1625 A. D.). The best and most popular version is that of Daya Shanker Naseem entitled *Gulzar-i-Naseem* composed in 1254 A.H. (1838 A. D.) which has immortalized the romance. *Mazhab-i-Ishq* is in prose intermingled with bits of poetry and was composed in 1804 A. D. having been revised by Afsos.

(2) *Idan-i-Manzum*, a masnavi composed at the desire of Doctor Gilchrist.

Mirza Lutf Ali Wila.

Mazharali Khan familiarly called Mirza Lutf Ali, whose *nom de plume* is Wila (Friendship), was the son of Suleiman Ali Khan poetically surnamed Widad and was born at Delhi. He was a pupil of Mirza Jan Tapish and Mushaffi. *Gulshan-i-Bekhar* mentions that he was also a pupil of Nizamuddin Mamnun. He joined the College as a Munshi and translated many Persian and other texts. His chief works are :

(1) A metrical translation into Urdu, of Saadi's *Pandnama* or 'moral preceptor' printed in 1803 A.D.

(2) A Urdu translation of Nasir Ali Khan Bilgrami Wasiti's *Haft Gulshan*, a collection of ethical tales and precepts. This translation from the Persian work was made at the request of Dr. Gilchrist in 1801 A. D. as is evident from the date given by the translator in the Colophon and from the two chronograms appended to the book. The work is divided into 7 chapters called Gulshans or gardens and contains a collection of tales and anecdotes on ethics, the etiquette of conversation and disputation and obedience to superior authority. A selection of moral precepts ascribed to the prophet Mohammad and the Caliph Ali is also added.

(3) The story of *Madho Nal*, the Brahman, and the dancing girl Kam Kandala, translated from the Brij Bhasha of Moti Ram Kabishwar or poet Moti Ram. The date of composition appearing from the chronograms is 1801 A. D.

(4) In collaboration with Lalluji Lal he made a prose translation into modern Hindi of the *Baital Pachisi* from the Brij Bhasha version of Surat Kabishwar or poet Surat. The twenty-five tales related by the Demon Betal to the Raja Vikramajit of Ujjain are very popular amongst the people and Children of India though they have no literary flavour.

(5) A translation of the Persian *Tarikh-i-Shershahi* or history of Sher Shah, which has also been translated into English.

(6) A Urdu Diwan of about 350 pages containing ghazals, qasidas, quatrains and a short autobiography. He presented a copy of his diwan to the College of Fort William in 1810 A. D.

Beni Narayan notices in his tazkira that Wila was alive in 1812 A. D. and was residing in Calcutta. He must have died some time after that date.

Hafizuddin Ahmad.

Hafizuddin Ahmad was a Munshi at Fort William College. In 1803 A.D. he translated Abul Fazal's *Ayar-i-Danish* (Touch-stone of Wisdom) under the name of *Khirad Afroz* (Illuminator of the Understanding). The *Ayar-i-Danish* of the famous prime minister Abul Fazal is a simpler Persian version of Husain Ibn Ali-al-Kashifi's *Anwar-i-Suhaili* (the Rays of Canopus) which are the fables of Kalilah and Damnah translated from the Sanskrit collection of apologues. The fables of Bidpai have also incompletely been translated by Mirza Mahdi from the Persian version

of Hussain Vaiz Kashifi under the title of *Anwar-i-Suhaili*, Mirza Mahdi was in the service of Captain Knox and accompanied him in the capacity of a Munshi to Calcutta and Gaya. Knowing the interest felt by Europeans in Urdu and the popularity of the Persian version with them, he undertook his Urdu translation. Captain Knox while at Gaya commissioned one well-known story-teller, Henga Khan, to make an Urdu translation of *Ayar-i-Danish.* Both these translations of Henga Khan and Mirza Mahdi were compared and that of Mirza Mahdi was adjudged to be the better one. The translation of Mirza Mahdi is in simple style of Urdu interspersed with verses. A Dakhini translation of *Anwar-i-Suhaili* was composed by Mohammad Ibrahim and printed in Madras in 1824 A.D. A Urdu translation entitled *Bostan-i-Hikmat* written by Faqir Mohammad Khan Goya, was composed in 1836 A. D. Another translation though abridged was made under the title of *Sitara-i-Hind* by Nawab Muhammad Ameer Ali Khan Wasiti in 1872 A. D. A metrical translation of these fables composed by Jani Bihari-lal Razi of Bharatpur was written in 1879 A. D. under the title of Arzang-i-Razi.

Ikram Ali Khan.

Ikram Ali Khan translated a chapter of a famous Arabian collection of treatises on Science and Philosophy entitled *Resalai Ikhwan-us-Safa* composed in the 10th century A.D. under the name of *Ikhwan-us-Safa.* (Brothers of Purity) written at the instance of the famous society of Bussrah called *Ikhwan-us-Safa.* The authors of these treatises fifty-one in number are ten and residents of Bussorah, some of whose names are: Abu Suleiman, Abul Hasan, Abu Ahmad. The complete collection in original is the work of different writers and has been translated by Doctor F. Dieterice in 1850-79 A. D. Ikram Ali Khan has translated the third Chapter which records an allegorical strife for the mastery between men and animals before the King of Genii. The classes of domestic animals are so wearied by the continual tyranny of their masters, mankind, that they implore the King of the Genii to hear the cause and adjudicate between servant and lord. A day is appointed and the pleading begins. This gives occasion to each to dilate upon his own utility and the ill return he has met with. The horse and ass, the camel and the sheep are all heard in turns and plead their cause with an eagerness that reminds one of the 'Evenings at Home.'

The translation was made in 1810 A.D. at the desire of Captain John William Taylor and is a model of easy, elegant and excellent Urdu although Arabic words sometimes preponderate.

Ikram Ali was the brother of Turab Ali and was appointed the Record-keeper in 1814 A.D. on the recommendation of his

patron Captain Abraham Lockett who was then Secretary of Fort William College.

Lallujilal.

Lallujilal, a Gujrati Brahmin who had taken up his residence in Northern India, though essentially a Hindu writer, was also skilled in Urdu and collaborated with Jawan in *Sakuntala Natak* and in *Singhasan Battisi*, a legend relating to the powers and exploits of Vikramajit of Ujjain, and with Wila in *Betal Pachisi* and story of Madho Nal. He also wrote in 1810 a collection of hundred anecdotes in Hindi and Urdu entitled *Lataif-i-Hind* (Indian Pleasantries).

Beni Narayan.

Beni Narayan is the author of *Diwan-i-Jahan* a Tazkira of Hindustani poets which was written at the instance of Thomas Roebuck, Secretary to the College at Calcutta. The work was compiled in 1812 A. D. and dedicated to Captain Roebuck. He also translated under the name of *Char Gulshan* the story of King Kaiwan and Farkhandah from a Persian original. He wrote the story in 1811 A.D. at the suggestion of Munshi Imam Bakhsh and submitted it to the notice of Captain Taylor, a professor of Hindustani at the College, who approved of it and rewarded the author for his manuscript which was deposited in the College Library. According to Garcin de Tassy Jahan also made a Urdu translation of the Persian *Tambih-ul-Ghaflin* of Shah Rafi-uddin of Calcutta in 1829 A.D. He also states that the author became a Mahomedan and a follower of the celebrated reformer Syed Ahmed.

Mirza Ali Lutf.

To the class of free lance in Urdu literature, belongs Mirza Ali, poetically surnamed Lutf, the son of Nazim Beg Khan, a native of Astrabad who came with Nadir Shah in 1154 A.H. and obtained an entry into the royal Court through Abul Mansur Khan Safdar Jung. Lutf also wrote Persian poetry and consulted his father who had the pseudonym of Hijri. In Urdu poetry Lutf, as he himself tells, was a pupil of no one. Lutf was going out for a tour in Hyderabad Deccan when he was called by Dr. Gilchrist and he wrote the famous tazkira entitled *Gulshan-i-Hind* (Garden of India). Lutf relates the story of the writing of the tazkira in the preface of *Gulshan-i-Hind*. This tazkira was written in 1801 A.D. at the request of Dr. Gilchrist based on a Persian tazkira of Urdu poets by Ali Ibrahim Khan called *Gulzar-i-Ibrahim* with many additions. It was not extant but luckily a copy of it was washed away in one of the Musi floods of Hyderabad Deccan, and was accidentally picked up and is now published with an admirable introduction by Moulvi Abdul Haq. The tazkira is interesting as it furnishes a specimen of the language of the period, affords glimpses of the great poets of the time with whom he came in

contact, casts a light on the society of the times he lived and is a valuable addition altogether although it is not free from inaccuracies. Lutf is a mediocre poet and his prose is not free from rhymes.

Moulvi Amanat Ullah.

One of the minor notabilities is Moulvi Amanat Ullah who wrote Urdu poetry under the pseudonym of Shaida. He rendered Ikhlaq Jalali, a book on morals in Persian, into Urdu under the title of *Jama-i-Ikhlaq* at the order of Captain James Mogatt and which was completed in 1805 A. D. In the preface the author indulges in fulsome flattery and pays extravagant tributes to his patron and to the Governor General Marquis of Wellesley. The translation is creditable and flowing. Amanat Ullah also wrote *Hidayat-ul-Islam* in Arabic and Urdu in 1804 A. D. in which he describes the ceremonies of Islam and which Doctor Gilchrist rendered into English. In 1810 A. D. he wrote a Urdu Grammar in verse entitled *Sarf-i-Urdu.*

Other writers.

Besides these writers of note there were others amongst whom may be mentioned Syed Jafar Ali Rawan of Lucknow. Iftkhar-uddin Ali Khan Shuhrat, Abdul Karim Khan Karim of Delhi, Mirza Hashim Ali Ayan, Mirza Qasim Ali Mumtaz, Mir Abdulla Miskin, Mirza Jan Taish, Moulvi Khalil Ullah Ashk and Mirza Mohammad Fitrat. Taish and Ashk may receive a little more notice. Askh translated *Akbarnama* under the title of *Waqiat-i-Akbar* in 1809 but it was not published. Taish wrote a book on Urdu idioms. In 1811 he rendered into Urdu verse some portions of *Bahar-i-Danish* His Kuliyat was published by the Fort William College.

Translations of the Quran. Shah Walli-Ullah. Shah Abdul Aziz. Shah Rafiuddin. Shah Abdul Qadir.

The great exponent of Mohammadanism Shah Walli Ullah, to whom Shibli pays an eloquent tribute in his book *Ilm-ul-Kalam*, flourished in Delhi in the end of 18th and beginning of 19th century when the dissolution of the Moghul Empire had set in. He wrote his famous book entitled *Hujjatullah-al-Baligha* in 1150 A. H., an exposition of the Quran, in Persian. His eldest son Moulvi Shah Abdul Aziz was equally famous frr his learning and piety as is shown by the famous flattering chronogram of Momin which gives the date of his death (1239 A.H.). He is the author of the Izalat-ul-Khafa. Shah Walli Ullah's second son Shah Rafiuddin (1163-1233 A. H.) was equally distinguished and he is noted for having made the first Urdu translation of the Quran. The third son, Moulvi Shah Abdul Qadir, (1167-1230 A. H.) who has surpassed the other members of the family and who was widely celebrated for his piety, deep learning and seclusion from the world. He made a second Urdu translation of the Quran in 1205 A. H.

under the title of *Mouzah-ul-Quran*. It is flowing, simple and fairly idiomatic. It also shows the depth of the scholarship of the translator. It was very popular and has still not lost its hold. Moulvi Nazir Ahmad in his translation of the Quran, has befittingly praised the brilliant house of Shah Walli Ullah and paid a striking homage to the translation of Shah Abdul Qadir. In fact he has gone to the length of saying that the subsequent translators of the Quran are not really translators of the Quran but only translators of the translations of Shah Walli Ullah and his sons. The Urdu translations of Shah Rafi-uddin and Shah Abdul Qadir are an index to the change coming over India and the waning influence of Persian.

Moulvi Ismail Delhvi.

Moulvi Ismail, another learned man of the time, was distantly related to the family of Shah Abdul Aziz who brought him up and gave his daughter's daughter in marriage to him. He came under the influence of Syed Ahmad and used to preach at the Masjid Jama at Delhi. At the direction of his *pir*, he left Delhi and started for Kohistan on the *Jihad*. He was, however, killed in the neighbourhood of the fort of Balai Kote. Shah Nasir jestingly refers to this incident in one of his qasida and also to the help of the Kotwal of the city (Delhi) Mirza Khani, who went to the rescue of Shah Nasir when the adherents of Syed Ahmad and Moulvi Ismail attacked him as they had been offended by his numerous verses. Moulvi Ismail was a deeply read man and is the author of many works in Urdu, the most notable being *Taqwiat-ul-Iman*. He also wrote a treatise on logic called Qirat-ul-Ain.

Not only text-books and translations were compiled but a great deal of attention was also paid to the grammar of the language, dictionaries and other helps to the students.

Grammars and Lexicons of Urdu, ancient and modern, compiled by European and Indian scholars.

The first Hindustani Grammar in foreign language was compiled in 1715 A. D. by John Joshua Ketelaer, who had been accredited to Shah Alam Bahadur Shah (1708-1712 A. D.) and Jahandar Shah (1712 A. D.) as Dutch envoy. In 1711 A. D. he was the Dutch East India Company's Director of trade at Surat. He passed through Agra both going to and coming from Lahore *via* Delhi in the company of Jahandar Shah. In 1716 A. D. he was appointed as a Dutch envoy to Persia. He wrote a grammar and a vocabulary of the "Lingua Hindustanica" which were published by David Mill in 1743 A. D. in his "Miscellanea Orientalia". Ketelaer's Grammar includes not only the Hindustani declensions and conjugations but also versions of the Ten Commandments, the creed and the Lord's prayer in that language. In 1744 A. D. was published the *Grammatica Hindustanica*, a grammar of Hindustani language in Latin by the

celebrated missionary Shultze. Hindustani words are given in the Perso-Arabic character with transliteration. The Nagri character is also explained. Mill's 'Dissertation Selectal' dealing with Indian alphabets and vocabulary was published in 1744 A. D. In 1748 A. D. J. F. Fritz published his 'Spraechmeister' which similarly deals with Indian alphabets and alphabets of other countries. In 1761 A. D. was published the *Alphabetum Brammahanicum* by a Missionary named Cassiano Beligatti dealing with Indian alphabets. It is the first book in which the vernacular words are printed in their own character in moveable types. In 1772 Hadley's grammar was published and in 1778 A. D. a grammar in Portuguese entitled 'Grammatica Indostana' were published. Doctor John Gilchrist was the foremost in his labour to compile grammars, lexicons and vocabularies, to publish texts and to carry on philological researches in the languages. His literary activities extended over a period of twenty years and he commenced his publication from 1787 A. D. He wrote about 15 works dealing with grammar, philology, guides and helps, dictionary and translations both from Persian and Hindi tales and proverbs and from English text-books. He collaborated with Indian Munshis and Pandits employed in Fort William College. At his suggestion and under his superintendence literary work on an extensive scale was carried on and numerous books were compiled. He was the main spring of all activities and his affability and courtesy attracted a notable band of scholars around him. The most important of his numerous publications are English Hindustani dictionary published in 1798 A. D. and a grammar of Hindustani language published in 1809 A. D. Captain Taylor and Doctor Hunter published a 'Dictionary Hindustani and English' in 1809 A. D. Moulvi Amanat Ullāh wrote in 1810 A. D. a short grammar of the Hindustani language in Hindu verse entitled *Sarfe Urdu.* John Shakespeare compiled a grammar of Hindustani language in 1813 A. D. and a Dictionary of Hindustani and English in 1817 A. D. Captain Price and Yates also wrote Hindustani grammars. Garcin de Tassy compiled many books in French and was the most distinguished of European scholars of Urdu. Duncan Forbes by his labours in the compiling of grammars and lexicons and in the editing of Urdu texts laid Urdu under a heavy debt. Fallon and Sir William Mcuier, the founder of the Asiatic Society of Bengal published many works dealing with Urdu grammar and lexicons. Platt published his grammar of Hindustani in 1874 A. D. and his Dictionary in 1884 A. D. Rev. T. Craven published his dictionaries in 1881 A. D. and they are regarded very useful publications for school purposes.

Insha and Qateel's *Darya-i-Latafat,* a treatise on Urdu grammar and syntax was compiled in 1802 A. D. and published

in 1848 A. D. at Murshidabad. It has already been noticed amongst the works of Insha. Mohammad Ibrahim Maqbah wrote a Urdu Grammar entitled *Tuhfa-i-Elphinstone* in 1823 A. D. Ahmad Ali of Delhi wrote an elementary grammar of Urdu entitled *Chashma-i-Faiz* 1845 A. D. Moulvi Imam Bux of the Delhi College wrote a grammar of Urdu language in 1849 A. D. Moulvi Karimuddin wrote a grammar in Urdu entitled *Qawaid-ul-Mubtadi*. Nisar Ali Beg, Faizullah Khan and Muhammad Ahsan published a Urdu Grammar in four parts. Muhammad Husain Azad wrote a grammar entitled *Jamiul-Qawaid* published in Lahore in 1845 A. D. Zamin Ali Jalal wrote *Gulshan-i-Faiz* a dictionary of Urdu and Hindi words and idioms explained in Persian, published in Lucknow in 1880 A. D. Amir Ahmad's *Amir-ul-Lughat* has already been noticed. Another stupendous work is the *Farhang-i-Asafia* of Moulvi Syed Ahmed in four volumes. It was written under the beneficence of the Nizam's patronage and is the result of untiring patience and indefatigable labours extending over many years. It not only gives meanings but traces the origin of the word and gives its various shades of meaning quoting for its authority standard authors, popular songs and hymns. *Nur-ul-Lughat*, written at Bilgram also deserves mention. Anjuman-i-Taraqqi Urdu has published a short grammar of Urdu language on new lines. An exhaustive and a scientific grammar is a desideratum and is yet to be written. The completion of *Amir-ul-Lughat* by a devoted band of Urdu scholars would be a most valuable contribution to the progress and development of Urdu language.

Labour of Christian missionaries in the field of Urdu literature.

Mention must also be made of the literary activities of Christian missionaries and the benefits conferred by them on Urdu.

The earliest translations of portions of scriptures are those of Benjamin Schulze and J. Callenberg extending from 1748 to 1750 A. D. Mirza Mohammad Fitrat and other learned natives of the College translated the New Testament which was revised by William Hunter and published in Calcutta in 1805 A. D. The missionaries at Serampore translated the new Testament in Hindi and Urdu. Rev. H. Martyn translated the New Testament from the Greek in Urdu in 1814 A. D. for the British and Foreign Bible Society and revised it with the aid of Mirza Mohammad Fitrat. The whole of the Bible was translated by Serampore missionaries in 5 volumes in 1816-1819 A. D. The missionaries in order to reach the common people used vernaculars as their medium and fostered its growth by compiling pamphlets starting newspapers composing religious hymns and writing various other useful books.

CHAPTER XVI.

URDU PROSE, PART II

THE AGE OF GHALIB AND SIR SYED AHMAD

Prose publications at Lucknow.

Urdu prose takes its start from Fort William College of Calcutta. But Lucknow, to which the centre of literary activities had shifted from Delhi, also saw the publication of a few more tales and romances in rhyming prose which however was not quite serviceable for ordinary purposes and which could never be widely popular. Alongside with publications at the College, *Bustan-i-Hikmat*, *Kalelah-o-Damna*, *Gul Bakavali*, *Gulshan-i-Naubahar*, *Gul-o-Sanobar*, *Nau Ratan* of Mohammad Baksh Mahjoor a pupil of Juraat and other books were written and printed at Lucknow.

Faqir Mohammad Goya: Bustan-i-Hikmat, 1251 A. H.

Nawab Faqir Mohammad Goya was a nobleman and a *Risaldar* in the army of the Nawab Kings of Oudh. He had the title of Hisamuddaulah. He wrote poetry under the pseudonym or Goya and was a pupil of Nasikh. He had also consulted Wazir. He was an author of a diwan which had been collected and arranged in 1242 A. H. but which could not be published till after his death. It first saw the light of the day in 1888 A. D. when the Newal Kishore Press published it. Goya died in 1266 A. H. (1850 A. D.)

He is the author of *Bustan-i-Hikmat*, a Urdu translation of *Anwar Suhaili*. It was finished in 1251 A. H. in Lucknow and Sheikh Nasikh wrote a laudatory chronogram. Goya has himself written how he came to translate the book. One day he was sitting with his friends amongst whom were Khwaja Wazir and Mian Furrukh and all were discussing the merit and excellence of *Anwar Suhaili*. In the course of conversation Goya was persuaded to undertake the translation.

Bustan-i-Hikmat is a free translation. It is a creditable performance but Arabic and Persian words preponderate. It is not very luminous and the language is not very perspicuous. Arabic sayings are found frequently interspersed and difficult words tend to make the translation obscure. It is not however in rhyming prose and presents a contrast to the jingling style of Sarur. The book has now become obsolete but it enjoyed popularity once.

Mirza Rajjab Ali Beg Sarur, died 1284 A. H.

The greatest writer of prose in Lucknow, the brightest exponent of rhyming prose was Mirza Rajjab Ali Beg Sarur, a man of varied accomplishments whose life was contemporaneous with that of Ghalib of Delhi.

He was a fine calligraphist, a musician of repute and a poet of no mean order.

Mirza Rajjab Ali Beg, the son of Mirza Asghar Ali Beg, was born in Lucknow in 1201 or 1202 A. H. He belonged to a respectable family and was reared up in the sensuous and literary atmosphere of Lucknow. He had good knowledge of Arabic and Persian and was a famous calligraphist of his time. In calligraphy he was the pupil of Mohammad Ibrahim who is mentioned with distinction in *Fisana-i-Ajaib*. He had considerable proficiency in the theory and practice of music. In poetry he was the pupil of Agha Nawazish Hussain *alias* Mirza Khani poetically surnamed Nawazish, a pupil of Mir Soz who is mentioned and quoted with reverence by Sarur.

Sarur was gregarious and jovial as a man. He had good address and attractive personality. He was a friend of Sharafuddin Meeruti, and of Ghalib who wrote an eulogistic review of *Gulzar i-Sarur* and calls Sarur the leading prose-writer of his age when writing about *Fisana-i-Ajaib*.

In 1240 A. H. Sarur went to Cawnpore and it is said that he was deported by the order of the Nawab Ghaziuddin Haidar. In *Fisana-i-Ajaib* he has caustically satirised Cawnpore which shows his disgust for the place. It was here that the famous *Fisana-i-Ajaib* was composed. It contained an eulogy in honour of the Nawab Ghaziuddin Haidar in the hope of getting permission for repatriation but when he died Sarur added a qasida in honour of Nawab Nasiruddin Haidar and took the manuscript to Lucknow. The famous poignant ode about Lucknow and his yearning for the town was written in Cawnpore. In 1824 A. D. (some say in 1845 A. D.) he composed his renowned *Fisana-i-Ajaib*. In 1846 A. D. Sarur's wife died and in the same year he had the privilege of being enrolled amongst the court poets of King Wajid Ali Shah of Oudh on a salary of rupees fifty when he presented an eulogistic chronogram commemorating the coronation through Qutab-ud-daulah Miftah-ul-Mulk Mohammad Kutab Ali Shah, a companion of the King. In 1847 A. D. he translated Shamsher Khani under the title of *Sarur-i-Sultani* at the order of King Wajid Ali Shah. Between 1847 and 1851 A. D. he wrote many short tales, the principal one being *Sharar-i-Isq* (Spark of Love) written at the command of Nawab Sikandar Begum of Bhopal. In 1856 A. D. he composed *Shagufa-i-Muhabbat* (the Blossom of Love) at the instance of Amjad Ali Khan, a nobleman of Sandila. The same year saw the annexation of Oudh and the exile of Wajid Ali Shah to Calcutta.

Sarur was left destitute and reverted to his old days of penury and want. He however sought the support of Syed Qurban Ali Sirashtedar of Mr. Carneggi and Munshi Sheo

Prasad who was employed in the commissariat but the Mutiny of 1857 A. D. again deprived him of it. Better days were in store for him as the Ruler of Benares, Maharaja Ishri Prasad Narain Singh invited him to Benares in 1859 A. D. and he was highly appreciated and much cherished by him. It was here that Sarur compiled his *Gulzar-i-Sarur* (the Garden of Pleasure or Sarur), and *Shabistan-i-Sarur* (the Nights of Pleasure or Sarur) and other stray pieces of prose and poetry. He was also invited by Maharaja Sheo Dan Singh of Alwar and was patronized by the Maharaja of Patiala who sent a pair of bejewelled bangles as a token of his esteem and appreciation. Sarur visited Delhi, Lucknow, Meerut and Rajputana as he describes the rigours and discomforts of his journey in one of his letters which have been collected and published in a volume entitled *Insha-i-Sarur* (Letters of Sarur). It is a repository of many interesting facts from where more details about Sarur's life and contemporary events could be culled. Once he was implicated in a charge of murder. He also visited Calcutta in 1863 A. D. to have his eyes treated and saw Wajid Ali Shah, the exiled king, at Mutia Burj in Calcutta, the place of his residence. He returned, however, with no success and had his eyes operated upon by one of the native doctors at Lucknow. He returned to Benares and died in 1284 A. H. (1867 A. D.) a year before the death of Ghalib.

His love for Lucknow.

Sarur was passionately fond of Lucknow and his love for his native place was overmastering and dominant. In the *Fisana-i-Ajaib* which was written at Cawnpore during his temporary exile there occurs a passionate ode full of love and longing about Lucknow. During his stay at Benares he was always yearning for his desolate home at Lucknow just as a caged nightingale longs for its beloved nest in the garden. The love of Lucknow, however, became a common theme for song. Nasikh has many verses of like nature. Nawab Mahr, a pupil of Nasikh, has also many such verses.

Fisana-i-Ajaib written, 1824 A. D.

The best known work of Sarur which has immortalised his name in the pages of the Urdu Literature is *Fisana-i-Ajaib* (a Tale of Marvels). It is conventional in subject and in style and is written after the manner of stock tales in Persian. It is an imaginary romance with plenty of necromancy and witchcraft, spiced with adventures in charmed forests and duels with demons and wizards. It is the delight of the young though it no longer appeals to the more advanced except for the language and the ingenious efforts at rhyming. The style is highly ornate and the action is very slow. It is written in *saja* or cooing of a dove and there are some passages in it in cadenced prose which appear as little eddies of song set

like gems in the story. It should not however altogether be judged by modern standards and present day canons. It is evidently written in imitation of Persian stories and tales, in the language and style then in vogue amongst the cultured and the polished. Unadorned and unaffected prose was held in contempt. Even letters of the learned men were written either in Persian or in highly flown rhyming Urdu with a preponderance of learned words. The revolt of Ghalib from this convention was very daring and highly commendable. Urdu prose takes its rise with imaginary tales as Urdu poetry did with ghazals and religious marsias and masnavis. The introduction of *Fisana-i-Ajaib* is highly interesting for it furnishes pictures of the life and society of Lucknow at that period, the habits and haunts of the nobles and commoners, their manners and their customs. It describes fairs and the various activities literary and otherwise of the age. But his pictures are idealistic and drawn with a self-satisfied feeling of complacency unlike those of Sarshar who sounds a note of revolt. " There is more compactness, symmetry, gracefulness in the descriptions of Lucknow, which Sarur has given in his *Fisana-i-Ajaib* than in anything which Sarshar ever wrote. Sarur, however, describes things, not men. We pass by the confectioner's shop and our mouth waters ; by the betel-sellers and we find the betel tempting ; by the cream shop and we feel sure that the Lucknow cream is better than that of Devonshire ; the pedlar, the lace maker, the jeweller, the grocer, they all keep first rate shops ; the Chowk and several other bazaars and promenades, which have disappeared since Sarur's times, we all see and walk through. We gaze at the magnificent buildings, we cast admiring glances at the lovely faces looking down with their voluptuous eyes from their balconies upon the scene below ; we feel we are in an enchanted place but we also feel that the men and women we are looking at are lying in a magnetic sleep. We are in a crowd but we are not jostled and hustled by it ; the lovely woman on the balcony does not return our glance ; the betel-seller is a regular flirt, yet would not talk to us ; the grocer is deaf, the pedlar is drunk, and we may run away with all the sweets in our pockets for the confectioner is fast asleep. There is no life anywhere. We are introduced to the famous musicians and performances of the day, but we hear no music ; great poets, statesmen, soldiers, wrestlers, all sorts of odd and eccentric characters flirt before us like the rows of shadowy figures in a phantasmagoria ; but they have no life in them. The author has painted them under the influence of chloroform. Of Sarur, therefore, I say that he has described Lucknow in a state of trance, like the enchanted city in Tennyson's Day Dream, where 'more than a picture seemeth all.' As in that city so in Lucknow as described by Sarur.

"Here sits the butler with a flask
Between his knees half drained ; and there
The wrinkled steward at his task,
The maid of honour charming fair,
The page has caught her hand in his ;
Her lips are severed as to speak ;
His own are pouted to a kiss ;
The blush is fixed upon her cheek."

Sarur was caught in the meshes of his own style. The trammels of rhyming prose were too irksome and too much in fashion to be cast off. Sarur's style is not conversational and his pictures as justly pointed out above by the late Mr. Bishan Narayan Dar, are dumb. The rhymes retard the movement of description and divert the attention to their intricacies and ingenuities. In his zeal for his native place Lucknow, Sarur has cast reflections in his picture on Amman who in his exordium to his *Bagh-o-Bahar* placed a premium on the natives of Delhi and their mastery over the Urdu language. In these tales, characterization is very slight, but the character of Malka Mahar Nigar in *Fisana-i-Ajaib* stands out conspicuously for its true love, faithfulness, bravery, shrewdness, and fortitude. Another interesting reference is the crude attempt to weave episodes with Englishmen for their characters. Many words of English and foreign extraction find place and they may be taken as the earliest specimens of European words in Urdu language. The sermon on the transitoriness of the world put in the mouth of a monkey is very deep and stirring and of a high order. *Fisana-i-Ajaib* is written in Nasr Musajjah as were also other works of Sarur though Nasr Murassa also finds occasional place. There are two notable imitations of this masterpiece of Sarur ; *Saraush-i-Sakhun* by Syed Fakhruddin Husain Khan Sakhun on Delhi composed in 1860 A. D. which attempts to cast ridicule of Sarur and *Tilism-i-Hairat* by Mohammad Jafarali Shewan of Lucknow written in 1872 A. D. to uphold the prestige and dignity of Sarur and Lucknow.

His other works.

In 1847 A. D. Sarur wrote his *Sarur-i-Sultani*, a translation of Shamsher Khani, a Persian abridgement of Firdousi's *Shah Namah* in the style of *Fisana-i-Ajaib* though the style was not suitable for historical purposes in narration of events. There is a remarkable piece which describes the praise of India and is quite patriotic in its tone. In 1851 A. D. he wrote *Sharar-i-Ishaq*. It describes an incident which occurred in the jungles of Bhopal. A pair of cranes noted for their devotion and love to each other was wandering in the forest when the male was shot and the female collected wood and set fire to itself in the orthodox style of *Suttee*. In 1851 A. D. he wrote another tale entitled *Shagufa-i-Mohabbat* at the instance of the Nazim of Oudh. It presented an old tale of Mahar Chand Khatri in a new garb. It also describes the exile and journey of

Wajid Ali Shah to Calcutta. In Benares he composed *Gulzar-i-Sarur* which is a translation of the Persian *Hadaiq-ul-Ushshaq* which elegorically describes the struggle of love and soul for supremacy. It is theological in subject and is written in Sarur's characteristic style. There is a review of Ghalib which is in rhyming prose in the vein of oriental reviewers. Another noteable work is *Shabistan-i-Sarur*, an adaptation of Arabian Nights which is highly ornate interspersed with verses and provides entertaining reading. The *Arabian Nights* has been very popular in India and had many translators. It was translated by Munshi Shams-uddin Ahmad in 1836 A.D. in Madras, under the title of *Hi-kayat-ul-Jalilah* for the use of the College at Fort Saint George. It contained only the first two hundred Nights. Another translation entitled *Tarjuma Alif Laila Ka*, was from the English translation of Forster by Munshi Abdul Karim in 1844 A. D. which is extremely simple and plain and which did not commend to the literary taste of the times. At the instance of Munshi Newal Kishore who had established a printing press at Lucknow, it was translated in 1862-1868 A. D. in Urdu verse in four parts by Mohammad Ashghar Ali Khan Nasim of Delhi, pupil of Momin, (Part I) Tota Ram Shayan (Parts II and III) and Munshi Shadilal Chaman (Part IV). A prose version was made by Tota Ram Shayan in 1868 A. D. Hamid Ali also wrote a translation in 1890 A. D. Mirza Hairat of Delhi made a translation in the form of novel in 1892 A. D. calling it *Shabistan-i-Hairat*.

Another important book of Sarur is *Nasr Nasrah Nasar* a congratulatory address written on the marriage of Prince Edward (afterwards King-Emperor Edward VII) in which the benefits of British rule are described in choice words. The letters of Sarur entitled *Insha-i-Sarur* have been referred to above and are written in rhyming prose.

Importance and position of Sarur.

The importance of Sarur as a great prose-writer of old school can never be underrated. He shines transcendantly in his own sphere and yields to none in his own domain. The rhyming prose with its involved sentences, laboured attempts, cumbersome structures ornamented with highly Persianised words and constructions was too elaborate and complicated a machinery to be used as a vehicle for ordinary purposes and had to be discarded when the age of business set in. Sarur however wielded the old weapon with dexterity and striking effect and is the greatest exponent of the old style. His pictures of Lucknow life and society are highly interesting. His fame as a prose-writer has eclipsed his work and worth as a poet and a calligraphist. His knowledge of music died with him. His diwan though no longer found must have been of a high order. His stray ghazals and verses found interspersed

in anthologies and in his prose works show his mastery in that line. Sarur though attached to the Lucknow School of Urdu poetry was never its servile imitator and chalked out a different path for himself disdaining artificiality and bombast. On the whole Sarur is a commanding personality and must be assigned a high place in the history of Urdu literature.

Ghalib: as a prose writer. His works in Urdu prose.

To the average reader Ghalib is only known as a Persian and Urdu poet of repute. He is also a prose writer of eminence both in Persian and Urdu. The quantity of his Persian prose is much greater than his poetry. His works in Urdu prose are :—his collection of letters ; a few reviews and introductions to books ; three short pamphlets entitled *Lataif-i-Ghalib*, *Tegh-i-Tez*, *Nama-i-Ghalib* written in reply to the attacks of the protagonists of the dictionary *Burhan Qata*, which had aroused a cloud of controversy which lasted for a considerable period ; and some parts of an unfinished story.

His charming letters contained in Urdu-i-Mualla, and Ud-i-Hindi.

The most important, interesting and fascinating of his Urdu writings are his charming letters collected and published in two books known as *Urdu-i-Mualla* (the Royal Urdu or Urdu of a High Standard) and *Ud-i-Hindi* (the Fragrant Stick of India). In the days of the Mohammadan supremacy Persian reigned supreme. Letters were written in Persian. It appears that Ghalib himself conformed to this practice till 1850 A. D. when he became absorbed in completing *Mihr-i-Nimroz* (the Midday Sun). It is probable that he might have taken then to writing letters in Urdu. Ghalib's letters are couched in his characteristic inimitable style and form the most entertaining reading. They are denuded of all conventionality, formality, and stiffness. There is no effort. They appear to be impromptu compositions written off-hand without much thought. His is really a conversational style but the letters do not sink to the level of colloquialism. They have a distinct flavour of literature. Transparent frankness and pungent humour are the most outstanding features of these letters. He boldly and unflinchingly, regardless of consequences, gives forth his opinions knowing full well that his earnestness and candour would win the affection of those to whom the letters were directed. The letters show a spontaneity, an ease and a lightness not to be met with heretofore in the sphere of Urdu and Persian epistolary writing. He writes as he would speak. Occasionally he lapses into a dialogue from a narrative thus affording the pleasure of a novel or a drama. With a few strokes of his pen he would present a living throbbing picture palpitating with life. Ghalib is an artist in his epistles too.

Importance of the letters of Ghalib. Their influence on the style of his successors.

The importance of these letters is immense. They herald a revolt in the domain of epistolary writings. The antiquated and cumbersome accessories of a letter called *Alqab* and *Adab*, the introductory parts, which were prolix, elaborate, and unnecessary were entirely discarded. Most of the letters begin with Sir, Dear Sir, or My Son. These short titles deprive letters of those tiresome qualities which disfigure most of the letters of the scholars of that age. It was a much needed innovation, to afford a relief to Urdu groaning with the incubus of artificiality, conventionality and useless lumber of learning. The freedom and ease they ushered were not popular with the learning-laden men but as time went on and people saw the need of a simple prose it gained strength and support and attracted many followers. But Ghalib's style is inimitable and no one has yet succeeded in surpassing or equalling it. The influence it exercised on the successive age was immense. Hali adopted it as a model with some modifications and was successful. Sir Syed Ahmad originally of Delhi and afterwards of Aligarh, Zakaullah, Azad and a host of other succeeding prose-writers could not have escaped his influence. The simple and unadorned prose was the only style for business and serious purposes of literature and the reform inaugurated by Ghalib was most needed, commendable and popular at a later day. The letters of Ghalib written in simple, natural and fascinating style are models of elegant prose and though copiously imitated have not been superseded.

The autobiographical interest of the letters and their humour.

These letters are also autobiographical in nature and cast side lights on the life of Ghalib. They are an index to his personality, to his character, and furnish illuminating details from which the story of his life could be reconstructed, his opinions and views on life and literature can be gleaned, his relations and his friends and his contemporaries can be ascertained and his characteristics and little personal touches can be discerned. They are replete with his jokes and light enjoyable humour. He adopts his pleasantries to his correspondents. It was his desire to afford pleasure to his readers, to provoke laughter, to disperse gloom. His humour is however not the humour of Voltair or of Swift. It is neither mimicry nor mordant. There is little of pungency which is however not distasteful, a little sting which does no harm, a little sarcasm at the expense of nobody. It has a piquancy and flavour all its own, and is pleasing to read. Very often it is subtle and delicate like that of Addison. The humour of Ghalib has redeemed the credit of Urdu Literature and exculpated it from the charge of being dry.

These delightful letters have another value which should not be ignored. They contain valuable pictures of the life and the times of the middle of 19th Century. They give an insight into the men and the manners of that age. Some of them also throw aside light on the events of the Mutiny of 1857 A. D. without any conscious effort, which might prove useful to the historian of that period.

The letters give pictures of the life and the times.

The tyranny of age was too great to be resisted by Ghalib and he had to bend himself to conform to the existing practice of writing reviews and prefaces in the orthodox and accepted style in rhyming prose. In his epistles he could afford to be informal and unconventional but in serious compositions he could not deviate from the established practice without giving offence to those who were dear to him but who had not the liberalised notions about literature. Ghalib was too good to inflict pain and cause displeasure. These exordia and reviews do not and cannot show the same naturalness, gaiety, spontaneity, ease and freedom. They are laboured lucubrations smacking of midnight oil. Ghalib could not escape artificiality and affectation owing to the very nature of the style. The most remarkable preface is the one written to the book of Mufti Mirlal entitled *Siraj-ul-Muarfat* which deals with the various religious practices and methods of worship and devotion. The preface which is a beautiful statement of sufistic doctrines shows what part these practices play in the realisation of Godhead and how the devotee can acquire the knowledge of one God through them. The three short pamphlets are vigorous and well written.

His rhyming prose.

Ghalib's position in the domain of Urdu prose is a very high one. He ushered in a new era in prose, supplied the long felt want of an enjoyable and refined humour, and brought into existence a light and breezy literature. His influence on the successive writers was commanding and far reaching.

His position as a prose writer.

Another movement, though not literary in character, did much to improve and foster the growth of Urdu prose. It began with the religious reforms of Syed Ahmad and his two learned instructors Shah Abdul Aziz and his brother Abdul Qadir. The idea gathered strength and momentum and with the lapse of years even when the movement led by Syed Ahmad had collapsed it found its culmination in the reforms and activities, educational, social, religious, moral, political and quasi-political of the famous Mohammadan leader Sir Syed Ahmad. The new doctrines which were preached by Syed Ahmad and his adherents aroused clouds

The religious reforms of Syed Ahmad.

of controversies which darkened the atmosphere for a number of years. Pamphlets, brochures and books were written, in defence or in reply as counterblasts. These were all written in Urdu, in plain, simple language, to appeal to the masses. The books written were polemical in character but an attempt was made to make prose simple, direct and vigorous.

Syed Ahmad, 1782-1831 A. D.

Syed Ahmad was born in 1782 A. D. and studied in his early years in Delhi, under the learned teachers Shaikh Abdul Aziz and Abdul Qadir. Under their guidance he embraced the doctrines of Wahabism which had originated in Persia and was making its appearance in India. Being a gifted and born leader of men he collected a band of fervent disciples around him and after propagating his doctrines at Delhi he set out in 1820 A. D. to Calcutta. In 1822 A. D. he embarked on a voyage of pilgrimage to Mecca and from there he proceeded to Constantinople and travelled for about 6 years in Turkey recruiting disciples. He returned to Delhi and noting the contrast in Islam in India and outside and struck with the superstition that had crept in and the tolerance showed to non-Mohammadans made him take up the role of an apostle advocating violent reforms. His zeal, however, knew no bounds. He preached a *Jihad* or Holy War against the Sikhs. In 1828 A. D. he started for Peshawar attended by his fervent disciple Haji Ismail the nephew of his old instructor. His adherents numbered over a lac and many of the notables who had embraced his doctrines gave him donations and subscriptions. In 1829 A. D. practically he made himself master of Peshawar but he was deserted by the Afghans, who had promised to help him, being disgusted with the rigours of his stern doctrines. He fled across the Indus and hid himself in mountains but was slain in 1831 A. D. in an encounter with a Sikh detachment under Sher Singh.

Notable books of Urdu prose pertaining to the religious movement of Syed Ahmad.

Shah Abdul Aziz is the author of the celebrated commentary on the Quran entitled *Tafsir-i-Azizia.* His brother Abdul Qadir was one of the first translators of the Quran into Urdu. It was finished in 1803 A. D. and first published by Syed Abdulla, disciple of Syed Ahmad, at Hughli in 1829 A. D. *Tambih-ul-ghaflin* or an Admonition to the Headless, is a work of Syed Ahmad in Persian rendered into Urdu by Abdulla and published at the same Press in 1830 A. D. Haji Ismail wrote a popular treatise in Urdu entitled *Taqwiatul Iman* or 'Strengthener of Faith.' Other works are *Targhib-i-Jihad* or Incitations to Holy War; *Hidayat-ul-Mominin* or Guide to True Believers; *Muzibul Kabir wal Bidat* (Expositions of Mortal Sins and Heresy); *Nasihat-ul-Mominin* or Admonitions to Muslims; *Miat-i-Masail* or Hundred Questions. These and numerous other controversial works were written by the disciples of Syed Ahmad to further

the promulgation of *Targhib-i-Muhammadiya*, the Progress of Mohammadi Religion, as the new preaching was called.

The Printing Press.

Besides the religious reform and its pamphlets many other influences were at work which had an important effect on the destiny of Urdu. The introduction of Printing revolutionized the old order of things. It helped to the production of numerous books. At the end of 18th Century Printing was first used in the College Press at Fort William College and all the works prepared by Doctor Gilchrist or his Munshis under his guidance and superintendence were printed there. But the expense was prohibitive and even Doctor Gilchrist had to abandon some of his own works. The characters of the type were also ungraceful and ugly and were not greatly suitable. The missionaries at Serampore had a press there in which they printed many works in Hindi, Hindustani, Assamese, Chinese, Bengali, Bhutia, Bikaneri, Burmese, Jaipuri, Kashmeri, Malaya, Konkani, Marathi, Gujrati, Punjabi, Pushtu, Oriya, Siamese, Singhalese, Tamil, Telagu, and many other dialects. A fire in 1812 A. D. however destroyed the Printing Press and most of the editions perished therein. In 1837 A. D. a Lithographic Press was set up in Delhi and it became a great factor in the increased publication of books. Old books which had been inaccessible were spread broadcast. Translations from English and foreign books, original compositions, and pamphlets, dealing with social, educational, moral, political and religious subjects, books of tales, legends and travels, lexicons and poetical diwans were printed and circulated. Ghaziuddin Haidar founded a typography at great expense at Lucknow and the first book to be printed was *Haft Qulzum* a lexicon. Other works printed in types at Lucknow were *Al manakabul Haidarat* or the Praise of Ghaziuddin in Arabic printed in 1819 A. D.; *Muhammad Haidiri*, a similar work in Persian prose and verse in 1238 A. H. or 1822 A. D. and *Guldasta-i-Muhabbat* an account in Persian prose and verse of the meeting of Lord Hastings and Ghaziuddin Haidar; *Panj Surah* or five *Surahs* of Quran printed in the form of *Tughra*; *Tajul Lughat* and Arabic dictionary explained in Persian. About the year 1830 A. D. Mr. Archer who had established a Lithographic Printing Press at Cawnpore came at the request of Nasiruddin Haidar to Lucknow with his press and entered his service. Another notable book was a translation of a book of Lord Brougham which is a treatise on the "objects, advantages and pleasures of science". It was translated from English into Urdu by Syed Kamaluddin Haidar *alias* Mohammad Mir Hussaini of Lucknow at the order of General Committee School Book Society, Calcutta, and printed at the Chhapakhana Sultani (His Majesty's Press) in 1843. The translation is simple, lucid and flowing. The first book lithographed at Lucknow was *Bahjat*

Maiziat being a commentary on the *Alfijyat*. In 1848 A. D. there were about 12 private lithographic presses in Lucknow. Those of Haji Mohammad Hussain and Mustafa Khan were regarded to be the best. In 1849 A. D. Kamaluddin Haidar Munshi to the observatory wishing to ingratiate himself into the good books of the Nawab wrote the history of the Royal family of Oudh. Two passages happened to displease the Nawab and instantly the observatory was abolished and the printing was forbidden at Lucknow lest this objectionable production might be published and gain circulation. Most of the printers migrated to Cawnpore. The most important event in the history of vernacular presses was the establishment of the press of Munshi Nawal Kishore, C. I. E., at Lucknow which rescued many old master-pieces from oblivion and destruction and helped to distribute literature broadcast. The press enlarged the narrow cycle of learning and extended education to all classes and even to ladies. It led to the study of the traditions (Sunnat) and the Quran and numerous commentaries came into existence. Hindustani translations were published and instead of learning Quran by rote people now began to study them. It led to results analogous to those which the translation and study of Bible produced in Europe.

Periodical and light literature.

One of the results of the progress of printing is the rapid increase of periodical and light literature. There appeared a crop of vernacular newspapers which were purveyors of news and views to the public. 'The establishment of a vernacular newspaper press, which lithography had rendered possible placed within the reach of a continually widening public the means of becoming acquainted with new ideas in every department of culture and practised the writers, who contributed to it, in the art of wielding their mother-tongue with effect in its application to European themes.'

Urdu became the official language of the Court.

In 1832 A.D. the vernaculars were substituted for Persian as the official language of Court and it not only gave a distinct and recognised status to Urdu but it also led to the transfer of the mass of the technical and foreign terms which had previously been only to a limited extent in popular use.

Religious tracts.

The dialectical and religious tracts published led to controversies which strengthened the hold of Urdu as the Moulvis vied with each other to appeal to the masses and swell their following.

The contact with the English literature.

The impact with the western culture led to the enriching of vocabulary and improvement in the style. The long involved cumbrous highly ornate sentences with balanced structures choking all sense were

discarded in favour of a direct and vigorous Urdu in which the manner was subordinate to the sense. The spread of education in subjects of western learning required text-books for which the old style was extremely unsuitable. The translations made at Calcutta and Lahore from English books were all done in simple style shorn of all unnecessary ornaments and artificialities. Urdu was no longer to hobble on Persian stilts.

The ideas of reform gathered force and strengthened and found an admirable advocate in Sir Syed Ahmad who was the dominant figure in the latter half of the 19th Century and the greatest leader of the Indian Muslims.

Sir Syed Ahmad, 1817-1898 A.D.

Sir Syed Ahmad was not only a leader, but an orator, a journalist, a man of letters, a statesman and a politician, a reformer and a philosopher. More than this, he was an influence. He collected around him a devoted band of workers whose activities shaped the course of the Urdu literature and exercised a profound change in the life of Indian Muslims. Sir Syed Ahmad would be dealt with here only as a journalist, a writer and a leader.

Syed Ahmad Khan was born at Delhi in 1817 A. D. of a distinguished family. His ancestors left Arabia and settled first at Damghan and then at Hamadan and Herat. They came into India at the time of Shah Jehan and were appointed to posts of trust and responsibility. His paternal grandfather was honoured with the title of Nawab *Jawadud Daula* by Alamgir II and which was later on bestowed on Syed Ahmad too. His father Mir Taqi, a much respected man, was offered the post of prime minister to Akbar Shah II which he refused. His mother, a cultured lady named Azizunnissa Begum, brought him up and gave him the customary education of the time. Syed Ahmad lived in the society of Ghalib, Sahbai, Azurda, Mufti Sadruddin, Shaifta, Momin, Nawab Ziauddin Ahmad Khan and other scholars. He used to call Ghalib his 'uncle'. In 1838 A.D. he started his life as a Sarishtedar in Delhi. In 1839 A. D. he became Naib Mir Munshi and in 1841 A. D. he was appointed a Munsiff when he passed Munsiff's examination. From 1846 to 1854 A. D. he remained in Delhi as Sadr Amin and composed his famous monumental work *Asare Sanadid* dealing with the ruins, architecture and mausoleums of Delhi. It attracted great attention and an English translation was attempted. Gacin De Tassy published a French translation in 1861 A.D. In 1842 A. D. he wrote a pamphlet entitled *Jila-ul-Qalub* on the birth of Mohammad; in 1844 A. D. *Tuhfai Hasan*; in 1844 A. D. *Tahsil Fi Jairul Sa-il* a translation of Persian *Maiyar-ul-Aqul*. During 1846 to 1863 A. D. he wrote more pamphlets; *Fawaid-ul-Afkar* in 1846 A. D.; *Qaul Matin*; *Kalmatul Haq* in 1849 A. D.; *Rah Sunnat* in 1850

A. D. *Yamnaqa* in 1852 A. D. in Persian; *Silsalat-ul-Malukin* 1852 A. D. a long list of kings of Delhi from Yudishtar; *Kimai Sadaat* in 1853 A. D.

In 1855 A. D. he was transferred to Bijnore as Sadr Amin. He wrote a history of Bijnore. He also edited the *Ain-i-Akbari* and corrected many mistakes and his services were acknowledged by the celebrated translator Blochmann. In 1857 A. D. the Indian Mutiny broke out and Sir Syed rendered help in various ways. He refused a big *Taluka* which was offered as a reward for his services. In 1858 A. D. he wrote the famous pamphlet on the causes of the Indian Mutiny which was not published till 1863 A. D. He also wrote a book entitled "Loyal Mohammadans of India". He also corrected *Tarikh Firozshahi* of Bernai for the Asiatic Society of Bengal. About 1860 A. D. he published his famous commentary on Bible entitled *Tabiunul Kalam* which aroused a bitter controversy in orthodox circles which severely criticised it but was favourably received by others especially in Europe. In 1862 A.D. he was transferred to Ghazipur and founded the famous Literary and Scientific Society for translating standard English works into Urdu, in order to enable the Mohammadans to have a glimpse of European thoughts and culture. The Duke of Argyle the then Secretary of State for India became the Patron and the Lieutenant-Governors of the Punjab and Bengal became its Vice-Patrons. It became very popular and some important treatises were compiled by its members on various subjects such as History, Agriculture, Biography, and Political Economy. In 1864 A. D. he was transferred to Aligarh and the Society moved along with him. In 1861 A. D. he established an English School at Moradabad and in 1864 A. D. at Ghazipur and delivered lectures in favour of the study of English. In 1866 A.D. he was instrumental in establishing British Indian Association. He started a journal of the Scientific Society which continued to flourish under the name of *Aligarh Institute Gazette* in which he wrote copiously on a variety of subjects social, moral, literary, political, and religious, Articles from English newspapers were translated and published. In 1867 A. D. he was transferred to Benares but his interest in his works did not abate. He strongly advocated the foundation of a Vernacular University and petitioned before the Governor-General who expressed sympathy with his ideals. In 1866 A. D. he wrote a pamphlet called *Risalai Akham Tuam Ahli Kitab* in which he advocated inter-dining with Europeans provided there were no forbidden things on the table. It created a stir in the orthodox circles and made Sir Syed unpopular with them. In 1869 A. D. he visited England with his son the famous Justice Syed Mohammad and obtained a personal insight into the manners and customs and religious, educational and political institutions of Europe. He wrote a

spirited rejoinder to Sir William Muir's *Life of Mohammad* and conceived an idea of establishing a Mohammadan residential College on the lines of Oxford and Cambridge University Colleges. He was decorated with the C. S. I. in England and returned to India in 1870 A. D. He started the famous monthly periodical called the *Tahzibul Ikhlaq* or the Social Reformer in Urdu which soon revolutionized Muslim India. It did for Mohammadans what the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* of Addison and Steele had done for the people in England. This journal was edited and published by Sir Syed to improve and widen the religious thoughts of Muslims, to induce them to turn to Western education and to bring about a general reformation in the community. It dealt with religious, social, and educational subjects on which Sir Syed Mohsin-ul-Mulk Wiqar-ul-Mulk and Moulvi Chirag Ali wrote in a free and courageous spirit. 'It tried to remove the false notions that Islam was antagonistic to science and reform, to show what causes had led their ancestors to believe in such notions, to make them hate and give up injurious and unwholesome customs, to bring home to their minds the extent and magnitude of their adversity, to purify *Mulla*-clogged Islam'. It naturally aroused hostile criticism and Sir Syed was dubbed 'an apostate', 'a worshipper of Nature' and an 'atheist' *Anwar-ul-Afaq* and *Nurul Anwar* newspapers were started as counterblasts and Sir Syed was ridiculed in the pages of the *Oudh Punch.* Towards the evening of his life the M. A. O. College, Aligarh, which later developed into a University, engrossed his attention. In 1878 A. D. he retired from Government service and devoted himself to educational, political, and social activities. He died in 1898 A. D. at a ripe old age mourned by the whole of India.

Sir Syed was probably the greatest Urdu journalist and wielded a vigorous and facile pen. His scholarship was remarkable. He is the author of the celebrated commentary on Quran which he could not complete. He published six volumes and the seventh was ready for publication. It covered only half the book. The first volume appeared in 1297 A. H. This commentary is distinguished from its compeers by supplementing stories from the Bible which had been only hinted at in the Quran, explaining the criticisms levelled against the Mohammadanism especially on the controversial subjects of Jehad, Maraaj or Ascension, Paradise and Hell, Pilgrimage etc.; by abstaining to refer to digressions and uncalled for traditions; by trying to dispel the doubts about the Quran which had arisen from the study of the modern sciences.

His style.

Sir Syed's style is vigorous, direct and simple. It does not boast of literary beauties and he was not a stylist in any sense of the word. There are

grammatical solecisms but he never cared to pay any heed to syntax and grammar. He disregarded the ordinary rules and canons but these solecisms do not detract from his reputation. He gave a deathblow to the highly involved ornate and artificial rhyming prose of the style of Zahuri and Bedil and showed the capacity of Urdu for matter-of-fact prose. He subordinates the manner to the matter. "More matter with less art" is his motto. There is no embellishment in his speech. It is plain and unadorned. The style never interferes with his subjects. The most distinctive quality in him is his command over language. He never falters. He wielded Urdu prose with a mastery unknown in previous history. Hali, his Boswell, calls him the father of Urdu prose. Another remarkable quality is that he could expound the most intricate, complex and highly technical subject in simple and lucid language. He had also the knack of describing the beauties and defects of his subjects in a graphic and realistic manner.

His service to Urdu literature and journalism.

Sir Syed must have been influenced by the plain conversational style of Ghalib. His own influence in popularising plain and unadorned Urdu is incalculable. He was a journalist *in excelsis* and his free and outspoken criticism and his racy and vigorous style contributed not a little to the growth of journalism in India.

His influence.

As an influence Sir Syed holds an unique place in Urdu literature. Like all great men he had the knack of attracting capable men and inspiring them with enthusiasm. His magnetic personality gathered together a band of literary enthusiasts whose activities were of far-reaching importance. The chief amongst them were Nawab Mohsinul Mulk, Wiqar-ul-Mulk, Moulvi Chirag Ali, Moulvi Zakaullah, Altaf Hussain Hali, Moulana Shibli, Moulana Nazir Ahmad and Moulvi Zain-ul-Abdin. Hali was the national bard ; Nazir Ahmad wrote didactic tales to improve and to educate ; Shibli and Zakaullah were the historians. Moulvi Chirag Ali, Wiqar-ul-Mulk, Mohsin-ul-Mulk wrote on literature and on general topics mostly controversial. The efforts of all these were directed to the cause of the regeneration of the Mohammadans. They harked back to the past holding forth pictures of the past splendour and prosperity and showed by contrast their present dire distress and abysmal ignorance. Sir Syed was the connecting link. He was also the main spring of all activities. The towering personality of Sir Syed advanced the cause of Urdu in no little measure and he deserves a very important seat amongst the benefactors of Urdu literature.

Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, 1837-1907 A. D.

Among the associates of Sir Syed, one of the most noted, is Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk. Born in 1837 A. D. of poor but highly respectable parents at Etawah, Syed Mehdi Ali entered life as a clerk of the East India Company on a miserable pittance of rupees ten. He worked his way up gradually, becoming an ahlmad in 1857 A. D., a sirashtedar, and finally a Tahsildar in 1861 A. D. when he gave proof of his high administrative capacity. He also composed the two well-known vernacular works on Criminal and Revenue Laws. In 1863 A. D. he successfully competed in Deputy Collector's Examination and topped the list. In 1867 A. D. he was appointed as a Deputy Collector in Mirzapur. His reputation as a successful and accomplished officer reached Sir Salar Jang who called him to Hyderabad and appointed him as Inspector-General of Revenue in 1874 A.D. As a Commissioner of Survey and Settlement Department he introduced many reforms of far-reaching character. It was Mohsin-ul-Mulk who was responsible for introducing Urdu in place of Persian as the Court language in Hyderabad proper and moffusil. In 1876 A.D. he became Revenue Secretary and in 1884 A.D. he rose to the post of Financial and Political Secretary. He was awarded the title of Munir Nawaz Jung, Mohsinuddaulah Mohsin-ul-Mulk. He visited England and made the acquaintance of Gladstone, but he retired from Hyderabad on a pension of Rs. 800 owing to intrigues and factions and repaired to Aligarh, the scene of his future labours.

His connection with Sir Syed. His journalistic and other services.

His connection with Sir Syed was of a long duration. It began in repulsion for in 1863 A. D. Mehdi Ali wrote against Sir Syed and called him an apostate. Gradually he came to recognise his worth and his earnestness of purpose and became one of his ardent supporters. He wrote frequently in *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* which was started in 1870 A.D. It marked an era in the history of Urdu literature for the paper contributed not a little to its advancement. Mohsin-ul-Mulk wrote many brilliant articles. They were mainly religious or historical and were intended to purge Islam of all its evils and superstitions and to restore it to its pristine glory, to advance the cause of his fallen co-religionists educationally, socially, morally, and politically. These articles give an idea of his vast erudition. Scholarship and breadth of view are the outstanding features. Hali states "Syed Mehdi Ali stimulated the hearts of the Mussulmans by describing to them the achievements of their ancestors. Whatever he wrote in support of Sir Syed Ahmad there was in it a reference to the standard and reliable authorities of old. Most of his articles are treatises of fairly considerable size which have been written with great research and labour." Shibli pays a glowing tribute when he says: "In the field of literature

he can claim to equal the most renowned writers. His is a style of writing which is peculiarly his own."

His style.

His style is characterized by singular force, ease and beauty. He writes lucidly and his figures of speech and metaphors do not mar the effect and do not obtrude aggressively and offensively. His older style was modelled on Persian being flowery and full of bombast, but it underwent a great change and became direct, simple, flowing and graceful. The articles have mostly been collected in volumes. The only book written by him is *Ayaat Bayyanat* on Islamic Faith which is polemical in character. It was at his instance that Zafar Ali Khan translated into Urdu the famous History of Conflict between Religion and Science.

His educational activities at Aligarh.

After his retirement he busied himself in educational activities, revived the defunct *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq* and gave a new lease of life to the *Aligarh Institute Gazette.* He identified himself with Aligarh movement and after the death of Sir Syed Ahmad carried on the work of Aligarh College as a general secretary and rescued it from a grave financial crisis brought about by a huge defalcation in its funds. He died in 1907 A.D. and was buried by the side of Sir Syed.

Azad: died 1910 A. D.

Shams-ul-Ulema Moulvi Mohammad Hussain, poetically surnamed Azad, son of Moulvi Baqir Ali, a friend of Zauq and pioneer of journalism in Northern India, was born at Delhi in the third decade of the last century. He grew up under the fostering care of Zauq who taught him prosody and the art of versification. Azad belonged to the old Delhi College which boasts of such distinguished men as Hali, Nazir Ahmad, Zakaullah and Master Piyare Lal Ashob as its pupils. Zauq introduced him to eminent scholars and first rate poetical assemblies. The poetic soul of Azad drank deep from these literary founts. The Mutiny of 1857 A. D. dealt a sad blow and led to the dispersal of old societies. Azad with his family and kinsmen after many wanderings came to Lucknow. His father had already perished in the Mutiny. The poems of Zauq and the pre-Mutiny compositions of Azad were also destroyed and lost. Azad tried to gain his livelihood in many ways in his exile. He became a teacher in a Military School but he soon gave it up. At last he came to Lahore in 1864 A. D. and stopped with Moulvi Rajjab Ali who introduced him to Pandit Man Phool, Mir Munshi to the Lieutenant-Governor, who gave him a job of rupees fifteen in Education Department. He was brought to the notice of Major Fuller who had a taste for oriental languages and his future was assured. At first he was appointed to compile text-books in Urdu and Persian for the

Punjab public schools. The first and second books of Persian, the first, second and third books of Urdu, the second part of *Qasis-i-Hind*, the Annals of India (1st and 3rd being compiled by Piyare Lal) were popular and valuable for beginners. He made special efforts to popularise education in the Punjab. He is the real founder of the Anjuman-i-Punjab which played an important part in the development of Urdu in that Province. In 1874 A. D. he advised Colonel Holroyd who had been transferred from the Military to the Education Department and who is one of the greatest benefactors of Urdu language and literature, to found a *Mushaira* under the auspices of the Anjuman-i-Punjab, which would tend to widen the scope of Urdu poetry and free it from the cramping influences of hyperbole and insincere love. In 1865 A. D. he undertook a journey to Calcutta on Government business and afterwards accompanied Pandit Man Phool on a political mission to Kabul and Bokhara. He went twice to Persia, the first time about 1865 A. D., the last time in 1883 A. D. Azad had made extensive studies of Persian both modern and ancient and his visits to Persia gave him an opportunity of studying the modern language in its purity. He made copious notes and his books on Persian are both interesting and valuable Colonel Holroyd appointed Azad to be a sub-editor of *Ataliq-i-Punjab* 'the Educator of the Punjab', a Government newspaper, on a salary of Rs. 75, the editor being Rai Bahadur Master Piyare Lal Ashob. After a time this Government publication was stopped and the *Punjab Magazine* made its appearance. Azad continued to serve as a sub-editor and after him Hali occupied the post for some time. Azad was the Assistant Secretary of the Anjuman-i-Punjab and after some time he was appointed Professor of Arabic and Persian in Government College, Lahore. In 1887 A.D. at the time of the Jubilee in recognition of his work in literature and education he was honoured with the title of Shams-ul-Ulema. Overwork and continuous mental strain, the rigours of his last journey to Persia, and the cruel death of his daughter whom he had well educated undermined his health and impaired his intellect. In 1889 A. D. signs of insanity appeared which developed and cut short his highly useful and literary career. He remained insane till his death which occurred on 22nd January, 1910 A. D.

His works.

Azad despite his short literary career is the author of many books.

1. Persian Readers, Books I and II.
2. Old Urdu Readers, Books I II and III.
3. Urdu ka Qaida and Qawaid Urdu.
4. Qasis-i-Hind, Part II.
5. Jamaul Qawaid, 1885 A. D.
6. The New Elementary Urdu Readers, Parts I, II and III.
7. Ab-i-Ḥayat.

8. Nairang-i-Khayal, 1880 A. D.
9. Sakhundan-i-Faris.
10. Qand Parsi.
11. Nasihat ka Karan Phool.
12. Diwan-i-Zauq.
13. Nazm Azad.
14. Durbar-i-Akbari.
15. Sapak Napak.
16. Janwaristan.
17. Nigaristan-i-Farsi.
18. Alahaiyat.

Text Books for schools in the Punjab.

The Urdu and Persian Readers and the elementary treatises on Grammar were meant for schools and had been compiled as text-books for beginners. They are written in an easy and lucid style and proved very useful to those for whom they were intended. For a very long time they continued to serve as text-books. *Qasis-i-Hind* which narrates remarkable episodes in Indian History in a vivid and forceful style has all along been popular with all classes of readers the school-going children and the scholars. The children read for the exciting incidents narrated therein and the scholars for the beautiful style, in which the book was written. The balanced sentences, the elegance and the aptness of diction, the piquancy and the raciness of style, the lucidity of treatment at once lift it from the sphere of text-books for the young.

Ab-i-Hayat.

The *Ab-i-Hayat* or 'Waters of Life' is the most admired and the most valuable of his works. It contains the biographies of eminent poets with detailed criticism of their works and selections from their poems. It also contains a history of Urdu language and the changes it underwent in different periods. It supplied a long-felt want. Before Azad there had been many tazkiras (biographies of poets) or guldastas (anthologies) but they were mostly unreliable and always fragmentary in character. A few lines used to be assigned to the most distinguished poets and most of them contained nothing but exaggerated titles and epithets. To Azad is Urdu literature indebted for writing a systematic and detailed history. It entailed great research and considerable labour on his part. It is a storehouse of information from which writers draw abundantly. Apart from the mine of knowledge it contains, it is written in inimitable style, the envy and despair of all. He is the greatest stylist in Urdu and *Ab-i-Hayat* is doubly endeared for its unique style. It is not plain and bald like that of Hali; it is not ponderous like that of Nazir Ahmad, smacking of midnight oil. It is piquant, vigorous, eloquent and racy. It has something which is indescribable and eludes capture. Unfortunately in his enthusiasm Azad did not sift his materials very carefully and later researches have doubted the accuracy of many of his statements. His glowing study of Zauq and comparative cold treatment of Ghalib with his carefully veiled attack on him has caused

some resentment. The parentage of Mirza Dabir has been taken exception to. The story about the last days of Insha has been contradicted. All these and other recent discoveries do not detract much from the value of this book. It was this book which laid the foundations of criticisms in Urdu and led indirectly to the writing of *Yadgar Ghalib* of Hali. It stimulated the interest in Urdu and preserved what was permanent and valuable in the history of Urdu literature. As a pioneer work, as a treasury of anecdotes and facts, it still holds its own. As an example of inimitable prose it can never be superseded.

Nairang-i-Khayal

Nairang-i-Khayal is also a new work of its kind. It is an instructive allegory dealing with human life written in two parts about 1880 A. D. Allegory and apologue have always caught the fancy of mankind. The Greek and Roman allegories, the allegories of Addison, John Bunyan and Spenser, allegories in the Masnavi of Moulana Rum, the Hitopadesh in Sanskrit and *Ikhwan-us-Safa* in Arabic enjoyed considerable popularity. To Azad belongs the credit of writing an allegory after the Greek model.

Nairang-i-Khayal discloses intimate acquaintance with the Greek mythological and allegorical lore. He was indebted to Doctor Leiter for the plan of his work but it is creditable to Azad that he could achieve such an amount of success handicapped as he was with the lack of knowledge of English. The *Nairang-i-Khayal* or Phenomenon of Imagination is written in his remarkable style, and is read more for its manner than for its matter.

Sakhundan-i-Faris.

Sakhundan-i-Faris is a history of Persian literature. 'It is a valuable treatise on Philology proving the identity of the origin of the Persian and the Sanskrit languages'. It contains an account of the customs and manners of the Persians and an interesting comparison is made with those of India. It is also the record of Azad's travels in Persia and his researches in that country. It is not such an exhaustive study of Persian literature as is Shibli's *Shairul Ajam* and his other kindred books but is valuable and interesting for its information and style.

Qand-i-Parsi and Nasihat ka Karan Phool.

Qand-i-Parsi is a useful treatise meant to serve as an aid to the study of modern Persian. It embodies his experiences gained in his travels to Persia. *Nasihat ka Karan Phool* or Ear-ring of Advice is a short book on female education in the form of a discussion between a wife and a husband. It is written in easy Urdu to improve the education of girls.

Diwan-i-Zauq.

Azad's great service to Urdu literature was the editing of the diwan of his master Zauq, a masterpiece of Urdu literature which he rescued from oblivion. With touching pathos he recites his tale of woe in *Ab-i-Hayat*. At great length and with minuteness of detail he describes how he gathered together the scattered poems of his poetical preceptor. He published the diwan with a preface and appended to it interesting notes showing on what occasions a particular verse or Ghazal was composed. These pleasing references enhance the value of the verses and invests them with a halo of romance. Azad is accused of interpolations but there is no foundation in this and the carping criticisms may safely be disregarded.

Nazam-i-Azad.

His collection of poems entitled *Nazam-i-Azad* has been noticed elsewhere.

Durbar-i-Akbari.

The last great work given to the world was *Durbar-i-Akbari* dealing with the reign of Akbar the Great. It contains an account of the splendid court of Akbar and his grandees, and is written in his characteristic style. Unfortunately it could not have the benefit of his revision. The book contains graphic picture of this dazzling period.

Later works.

Sapak Napak and *Janwaristan* relate to his period of insanity, *Sapak Napak* is a disconnected account of his rambling writings in divinity during his insanity. To such an extent was Azad devoted to literature that in his lucid intervals he always read or wrote something. *Janwaristan* which has very recently been published is a posthumous work in his saner moments about animals and their cries. *Nigaristan-i-Faris* is also a posthumous work published about a year back. It is a short account of Persian poets of Persia and India. It begins with Rodki, and ends with Hazin, Waqif and Arzu and contains an account of 36 poets with short extracts from their works. The language is plain and simple and has none of the piquancy and *nerve* of *Ab-i-Hayat* presumably because it relates to the early period of his authorship. The last book of Azad which is published by his grandson is called *Alahiyat*.

His importance.

Azad is one of the greatest and most dominant figures of Modern Urdu literature. As a pioneer and leader of the new movement, as a poet ushering in a new era, as a founder of the new school of poetry he has already been noticed in foregoing pages. As a Persian scholar who taught modern Persian, as an educationist who took a prominent part in the advancement of learning in the Punjab, as a journalist of a high order, as a critic of considerable merit, as a distinguished professor, as a writer of eminence and a man of

letters, as a champion of Urdu, as a lecturer of repute, Azad is pre-eminent.

Azad as a stylist.

But the greatest claim of Azad to be remembered is, Azad as a prose writer and a stylist. His style is inimitable and can never be surpassed. As a stylist nobody can touch him. In him the true Urdu finds its greatest and best exponent. It does not abound in learned expressions and polyglot words indigestible to Urdu. He does not import highly Persianised expressions and imageries as is unfortunately the tendency now-a-days in some circles. He combines the grace and charm of Bhasha, the directness of English, with the beauty of Persian. His style as has been mentioned above is piquant and racy with a flavour all its own. It is free from mannerisms, is eloquent and shows no signs of effort. Quaint similes abound. There is a limpid strain of music. He can fitly be ranked with De Quincy, Lamb and Stevenson as a great master of style.

Azad's position in his own day.

Among his own colleagues Azad was always regarded with respect and admiration. Hali pays a glowing tribute in his reviews of *Ab-i-Hayat* and *Nairang-i-Khayal*. He acknowledges him to be the originator of new poetry in Urdu Shibli always called Azad the hero of Urdu and on his death remembered him as a "God of Urdu". Nazir Ahmed and Zakaullah always treated him with marked respect.

Azad: the man.

As a man Azad was witty and courteous free from all bigotry and prejudices. He was, however, easily excitable but quick to forgive. Though he was held in esteem by his contemporaries still he was not on good terms with them and occasionally the relations were strained on account of some controversy, literary or otherwise.

His position in Urdu literature.

Azad has left his indelible mark on Urdu literature. For his versatility and many-sided activities, as a poet of considerable merit and the pioneer of new movement in literature, as a prose writer and critic of great eminence and a stylist unsurpassed and inimitable Azad holds a position second to none.

Hali's prose works.

Hali as a poet has been dealt with elsewhere. As a prose writer he occupies an honourable place. His prose works in Urdu are:

1. *Tiryaq-i-Masmum* or Antidote to Poison, 1868 A. D.
2. Translation of a book on Geology.
3. *Majlis-ul-Nisa*, a book on Female Education (2 parts), 1874 A. D.

4. *Hayat Saadi* or Life of Sheikh Saadi of Shiraz, 1886 A. D.
5. *Muquddama* or a long introduction to the *Dewan-i-Hali.*
6. *Yadgar Ghalib* or Life and Critical Study of Ghalib, 1896 A. D.
7. *Hayat Jaweed* or Life and Work of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, 1901 A. D.
8. *Mazamin Hali* or collection of the various articles contributed to magazines and newspapers by Hali.

Earlier prose compositions.

The first was written in defence of Mohammadanism as a reply to the charges of a Mohammadan of Panipat who had been converted to Christianity. It is not remarkable for any literary beauty and is only interesting as affording an indication of Hali's literary bent of mind. The second is a translation of an Arabic work on Geology which itself was a translation from the French. It was published by the Punjab University in the time of Leiter. It is written in a clear simple style. *Majlis-ul-Nisa* was written for girls and ladies. The idioms employed are such as are used by the ladies. It served a useful purpose in furthering the cause of female education and remained long as a text-book for Girls' schools. He got a prize of Rs. 400 from the hands of Lord Northbrooke for writing this book. All these are his earlier prose compositions.

Hayat-i-Saadi.

Hayat-i-Saadi, the Life of Saadi which was the first one of its kind in Urdu and is a more ambitious and a scholarly work first brought Hali into the forefront of Urdu prose writers. It describes the life, travels and works of the immortal Persian poet. It made Hali's reputation as a biographer and a prose writer of considerable merit.

Muquddama Dewan Hali.

The publication of his dewan with its memorable introduction took the Urdu world by storm. The *Muquddama* which covers more than two hundred pages constitutes the modern *Ars poetica*. *Sher-o-Shairi* (Poetry and Poesy) as the introduction is called is quite independent of the dewan and is a valuable essay on criticism setting forth the ideals of poetry in different nations. It shows some research and a wide reading. In it the poetry of Greeks, Romans, English and Arabians, are described though in a sketchy, superficial and disconnected manner. Hali does not dive deep into European poetry because he was not equipped for it and knew very little English. The Sanskrit poetry is altogether ignored because Hali was not acquainted with it at all. But it is valuable not only for the storehouse of information but also because it was the first of its

kind. It held up different ideals before the convention-ridden Urdu poets. It opened fresh avenues hitherto unexplored. It is remarkable that such an essay should first be written by one who was an orientalist devoid of western education. His example is senselessly followed by a crop of later writers who make it a point to append long introductions to their poems *ad nauseum* dealing with the ideals of poetry which have already been set forth previously, in a better and more exhaustive manner.

Yadgar Ghalib.

The most popular of Hali's works is his life and criticism of Ghalib which has not been superseded. It is an excellent introduction to and criticism of his works. As a biography it deals with the various incidents of Ghalib's life and is a valuable record of sayings, pithy remarks, pleasantries and anecdotes of Ghalib dear to every heart. It chronicles at firsthand all that is worthy to be known about Ghalib. It is also a sympathetic study of Ghalib's prose and poetry both in Persian and Urdu. Difficult verses are elucidated. Occasions when the various verses were composed are narrated thus adding a zest and a point to the verses. Hali did for Ghalib what Azad has done for Zauq. Both are devoted admirers of their *Ustads*. *Yadgar Ghalib* ranks high as a critical work. It was one of the pioneer works of its kind. The criticisms are of a high order though not free from the laudatory spirit in which it is written. A dispassionate criticism in a cold detached spirit was not possible for Hali was wrapped up in his poetical master.

Hayat-i-Jaweed.

The greatest of Hali's prose work, his *magnum opus* is his *Hayat Jaweed* in which he describes the life and work of Sir Syed, the greatest Mohammadan leader of 19th century. It is an exhaustive work extending to several hundred pages. The long chequered and eventful life of Sir Syed with his various activities is described with a minuteness worthy of a Boswell. Sir Syed has been shown in the best light as a leader, statesman, reformer social and religious, publicist, man of letters, writer, educationlist and journalist. Light has been thrown on the activities of Sir Syed Ahmad and his associates. It is indeed a monumental work but it is hero worship *in excelsis*. It lays itself open to the charge of Shibli, a great admirer of Hali in many respects, that only one side of the picture has been shown. Defects have been plausibly explained or slurred over. It should not, however, be judged with strictness for biography and criticism are in a budding state and the application of pruning knife may often prove more harmful than beneficial.

Mazmun-i-Hali.

Mazmun-i-Hali is the collection of Hali's numerous articles written and contributed to various papers notably *Tahzibul Akhlaq* of Sir Syed Ahmad. Hali was a copious and a facile writer and wrote to the papers

abundantly. He also brought out an edition of the letters of Shaifta.

His style.

Hali's style is simple, direct, idiomatic and forceful. It has none of the piquancy and raciness of Azad nor it has the subtle and delicate humour of Nazir Ahmad. Hali was no stylist. His works are remarkable for the matter rather than for the manner. "More matter with less art" is also his motto. The figures of speech are never laid thick and they never obtrude aggressively. He never weaves imageries and never revels in language for its own sake. He consciously and studiously avoids a plethora of ornaments. He writes in a clear, lucid and bald style which never soars but which is always vigorous and eloquent. Modern Urdu prose has found in him an able exponent and he carried on the tradition of simplicity and lucidity of Ghalib and Sir Syed.

His position.

As a prose writer and a critic Hali occupies a lofty place and his works have served useful models to the succeeding generations.

Nazir Ahmad, 1831-1912 A. D.

Shams-ul-Ulema Khan Bahadur Maulana Nazir Ahmad was born at Rahr, a village in the district of Bijnore, in the United Provinces, in 1831 A. D. in a family in which Islamic learning was hereditary. He was the son of Syed Saadat Ali from whom he received his early training. He then sat at the feet of Moulvi Nasrullah, Deputy Collector, Bijnore, but was soon called away to Delhi and about 1845 A. D. became a pupil of Moulvi Abdul Khaliq whose grand-daughter he married. The famous Professor of Arabic in the Delhi College, Moulvi Mamluk Ali attracted Nazir Ahmad and he could join the College after great difficulties. He studied Arabic literature, philosophy and mathematics and was the contemporary of Hali, Azad, Karimuddin, Zakaullah and Ashob. The Principal of the College, Mr. Taylor, persuaded Nazir Ahmad to study English but so strong was the prejudice of his father against it that he eventually opposed it and Nazir Ahmad had to abandon the idea.

Like great men of this age Nazir Ahmad began his life by accepting a small appointment in the Punjab. He became a teacher on a salary of rupees twenty or twenty-five. After a time he was selected for the post of Deputy-Inspector of Schools on a pay of rupees hundred. During the Mutiny he saved the life of an English lady and was rewarded with a medal, a sum of money and was raised to the rank of Inspector of Schools. He was then transferred to Allahabad. It was here that Nazir Ahmad was spurred to learn English as he felt the mortification of not knowing the language which was the chief medium of intercourse between Indians and their European officers. So rapid was

his progress that he attained a moderate proficiency within six months but he continued to furbish it up by constant reading. In 1861 A. D. he was made one of the chief translators appointed to translate the Indian Penal Code. His work was appreciated and he was appointed a Tahsildar and was soon after promoted. He at first became a Deputy Collector of Settlement and was then posted to the district.

Nazir Ahmad made a creditable translation of a book on astronomy which was written by the then resident of Kashmir and for which Nazir Ahmad was given a reward of rupees one thousand. Sir Salar Jung, the famous prime minister of Hyderabad, came to know of Nazir Ahmad and took the services of Nazir Ahmad on loan for Hyderabad. The Government agreed to the deputation and Nazir Ahmad was employed in the Settlement on a salary of rupees eight hundred. It was during this time that he learnt the Quran by rote and became Hafiz. At the persuasion of Sir Salar Jung Nazir Ahmad resigned the Government appointment and became a servant of the State. He worked his way up and rose to the very high rank of a member of the Board of Revenue with rupees one thousand and seven hundred as salary. His son and dependents were also given suitable posts carrying handsome remuneration. At the direction of Sir Salar Jung he prepared a course of studies and Sir Salar's son, Laiq Ali Khan who assumed the honorific title of Sir Salar Jung II on the death of his father, was his pupil. After some time he retired on a pension from the Nizam's Government and settled at Delhi where he devoted himself to the cause of education and literature. He was one of the enthusiastic workers in the noble band of Sir Syed and by his lectures, writings and personality did much for the uplift of his co-religionists. After a strenuous life he died in 1912 A. D. honoured and mourned by his community.

He is the author of the following works :—

His works.

(1) Mirat-ul-Urus.
(2) Binat-un-Nash.
(3) Taubat-un-Nasuh.
(4) Ibn-ul-Waqt.
(5) Muhasanat.
(6) Ayama.
(7) Ruya-i-Sadiqa.
(8) Sarf-i-Saghir.
(9) Rasm-ul-Khat.
(10) Mawazah-Husnah.
(11) Afsana-i-Ghadar.
(12) Nisab-i-Khusru.
(13) Translation of Indian Penal Code.
(14) Translation of Indian Evidence Act.
(15) Translation of Income-Tax Act.
(16) Translation of Stamp Act.
(17) Seven brochures on revenue, criminal and other branches of administration for Hyderabad.

(18) Chand Pand.
(19) Hikayat.
(20) Mubadi-ul-Hikmat.
(21) *Ma Yag Nik Fis Saraf.*
(22) Translation of the Quran.
(23) Adyat-ul-Quran.
(24) Dah-Surah.
(25) Al-Haquq-o-Al-Faraiz in three volumes.
(26) Amhat-ul-Ummat.
(27) Matalib-i-Quran (unfinished).
(28) Ijtahad.
(29) Majmua-i-Nazm-i-Benazir.
(30) Majmua-i-lecture.

Books written for the use of Schools and Government officers.

Nazir Ahmad was a prolific writer and a facile lecturer. He wrote certain works, *e.g.*, *Ma Yagh Nik Fis Sarf*, a treatise on Arabic Etymology, *Mabadi-ul-Hikmat*, a book on the science of logic, *Rasm-ul-khat*, a brochure on calligraphy, *Hikayat* a collection of moral and entertaining anecdotes for the use of schools. He translated the various Acts of the Government with considerable skill. To translate the Indian Penal Code was a herculean task. At first Moulvi Karim Bux and Moulvi Uzmatullah were appointed and Moulvi Nazir Ahmad was deputed to revise the translation at the order of Sir William Muir, the Lieutenant Governor of the U. P. Nazir Ahmad with his patient labour, indefatigable energy and wide scholarship acquitted himself with great credit. The translation of the Penal Code and other Acts is extremely perspicuous and rendered with great exactitude. Appropriate vernacular words were coined with great skill and they are still current and on the lips of everybody. They even conveyed the shade of meaning of some very difficult English expressions. The *Qanun-i-Shahadat* or Evidence Act is a translation from the work of Leperwin. *Afsana-i-Ghadar* is a translation from the work of W. Edward dealing with his adventures during the Mutiny of 1857 A. D. The seven brochures on the various branches of administration were never published and were written for the officials of Hyderabad.

Controversial books.

At that period great controversy went on between Muslim divines and Christian preachers some of whom were proselytes of the Islamic faith. Sir Syed Ahmad, Chiragh Ali, Muhsin-ul-Mulk and others were all actively engaged in these discussions. One Ahmad Shah, a Christian, wrote a book entitled *Amhat-ul-Momin* in which he criticised the Prophet and his teachings. Nazir Ahmad wrote *Amhat-ul-Ummat* in reply which was widely appreciated in some circles and strongly condemned in others. So strong was the feeling against it that the copies of this work were publicly burnt.

Religious books.

Nazir Ahmad rendered yeoman's service to the Mohammedan public by his Urdu translation of the Quran in an easy and idiomatic manner. It made the study of the Quran popular with those who had been

accustomed to learn the texts by rote without understanding them. The older Urdu translations were written in involved language which had also become archaic and found no favour with the general public. For three years (1893-96 A. D.) he worked at it with the help of four paid Moulvis. The only defect is that Nazir Ahmad sometimes sacrificed the sense for the sake of a Urdu idiom and encumbered the translation with glosses, commentaries and quotations. He also wrote towards the end of his life *Adyat-ul-Quran*, *Dah Surah* and *Al-Haquq-o-Alfaraiz*. The last work is most comprehensive and deals with theology, beliefs, morals and practice of Islam. He also wrote a book entitled *Ijtahad*. His last unfinished book was *Matalib Quran* which has been published. Nazir Ahmad had a press of his own which he named Shamsi Press in which the Quran and other works were printed.

Stories and books of instruction.

The first book which brought Nazir Ahmad to prominence was his *Mirat-ul-Urus* or Bride's Mirror, a tale of domestic life of a respectable Mohammadan family of the Hindustan proper. It was written when Nazir Ahmad was a Deputy Collector and it shows how an ignorant and an uneducated girl in a high circle in society became changed by education. So popular it became that both Hindu and Mohammadan girls read it and profited by it. It served as a sort of *vade mecum*. The language is easy, idiomatic and remarkable for the exactness with which the author has reproduced the lingo of the zenana. The book was well received by the public as it commanded a huge sale and by the Government which purchased one thousand copies and gave a reward of rupees one thousand. It has been translated in all the principal vernaculars of the country. His next work was *Binat-un-Naash* which is a sequel to *Mirat-ul-Urus* and deals with the advantages of female education on a larger scale. Useful and instructive lessons on general knowledge and physical science are imparted by means of a dialogue carried on by the pupil and her governess. It was hailed with delight and the public and the Government both appreciated it. It was followed by *Taubat-un-Nasuh* or Repentance of Nasuh which is reckoned to be one of Nazir Ahmad's best books. It is a tale of penitent sinner whom a serious attack of cholera from which he escapes after hopelessness brings to a sense of his duty to God and turns his thoughts to the world to come. His wife readily joins and takes up his views but the children especially the eldest prove intractable. Nazir Ahmad depicts the evils of a bad upbringing of children and shows the necessity of careful training and discipline in early years. In *Ibn-ul-Waqt* or 'Son of Time' Nazir Ahmad 'portrays a native gentleman who rising to position owing to some services in the Indian Mutiny takes to modern notions of European

living and not only adopts European dress but actually joins European society shunning his former associates and relations thus alienating their sympathies. On the departure of his English friend he finds himself deserted by the English society and has again to take his place amongst his own people. It is said on the authority of Nazir Ahmad that it is a faint and imperfect reflection of the author himself. In *Ayama* he advocates widow remarriage describing the pitiful and miserable lot of Indian widows. It was remarkably successful and was fruitful of good results. *Muhasanat* is a tale showing the evil results of polygamy in Mohammadan families. *Ruya-i-Sadiqa* is an exposition of Mohammadan tenets in the form of a dialogue between husband and wife. All those tales are of a didactic character having some moral lesson in view. They are written in excellent Urdu.

As a lecturer.

After his retirement Nazir Ahmad took to lectures and public speaking. He made his *debut* as a public speaker in 1888 A.D. He used to deliver his addresses under the auspices of Anjuman-i-Himayat-ul-Islam at Lahore, the annual meetings of Madrasa-i-Tibya (Medical College) at Delhi and at the sessions of Mohammadan Educational Conference. It was under the inspiration of Sir Syed that he was present at every important meeting. The collection of his lectures covers a great variety of subjects treating of education, religious precepts. Islamic doctrines and female emancipation. He was a graceful and dignified lecturer popular with his audience whom he regaled with choice bits of learning and information, pleasant *bon mots*, interesting anecdotes and useful maxims.

As a poet.

In later years he took to poetry and he used to intersperse his lectures with verses of his own composition. These are versified prose dull and occasionally vapid. His muse is pedestrian and the verses are from his head and not from his heart. Gradually they improved in quality but they never attained to the same poetic fervour which characterizes true poetry. These poems have been collected and published under the title of *Majmua-i-Benazir*. The poems do not enhance the reputation of Nazir Ahmad.

As a Man.

As a man Nazir Ahmad was simple, loving and courteous. He led an abstemious religious life and was very economical. He had generous impulses and he helped poor scholars and helped them in life. Towards the end of his life Nazir Ahmad engaged himself in trade and thus added to his large wealth. Upto his death Nazir Ahmad occupied himself in reading-writing and imparting lessons in Arabic literature. He was modest with flashes of humour. He always praised his colleagues. He gave handsome donations to the M. A.-O. College, Aligarh, and took interest in its affairs.

His titles.

In 1897 A. D. he was given the title of Shams-ul-Ulama. In 1902 A. D. the University of Edinburgh conferred on him the honorary degree of LL. D. In 1910 the Punjab University bestowed on him the degree of D. O. L. (Doctor of Oriental Learning) and the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab who was presiding at the convocation as the Chancellor eulogised the learning and talents of Nazir Ahmad.

His style.

Nazir Ahmad's style is clear, simple and easy. Latterly it grew scholarly and ponderous and he indulged too much in his learning. Learned Persian and Arabic words with a large number of Arabic quotations, sometimes unnecessary are found plentiful. It has not the raciness and the sweetness of Azad's. Occasionally he indulges in similes and uses imagery not suitable to the occasions and imports unnecessarily English words which mar the beauty and dignity of the composition. The chief characteristic of his style is his humour with which he seasoned his novels, lectures and even serious compositions. This humour is refined and restrained with nothing of boisterousness.

His popularity.

What distinguishes Nazir Ahmad from his contemporaries is his extent of influence. Sir Syed was the originator of plain business-like Urdu for serious compositions. Hali led the way in the writing of biographies and critiques on the principles of Western criticism. Azad was pre-eminent writer of '*belles lettres*'. Shibli was a keen student of history. But none of these attained the distinction of being so widely known and read as Nazir Ahmad. By the translation of the Indian Penal Code and other Acts of Government his name was familiarised to the public. By the translation of the Quran his name became a household word to the Indian Muslims. By his writing interesting and instructive books on female education and by his entertaining novels he endeared himself to girls, boys and mothers of every home, Hindu or Muslim. By his lectures he made a name for himself and gathered a large number of admirers.

His position.

Nazir Ahmad occupies a distinguished place amongst the writers of the latter half of 19th century, for his novels, his literary achievements, and his efforts in the cause of education, male and female, religion and regeneration of Mohammadans. He was a worthy associate of Sir Syed and an important factor in moulding the lives of Musulmans during that period.

Shibli Naomani, 1857-1914 A. D.

Shibli Naomani was one of the most striking personalities of his age. He was a versatile genius and had a remarkable career as a historian, journalist, educationist, writer of *belles lettres,* poet, literary critic,

social reformer, publicist, teacher, preacher, philosopher, and theologian. He most distinguished himself in history, research, *belles lettres* and education. He was born in 1857 A. D. at Bindaul, a village in the district of Azamgarh, United Provinces. He was brought up at Azamgarh by his father, Sheikh Habibullah, who was a pleader there. He received early education at the hands of Moulvi Shukra-Ullah and was well-grounded in Persian and Arabic. He then came under the influence of a very celebrated and competent teacher Maulana Faruk Chiria Koti, a head teacher at Ghazipur, who was renowned for his knowledge of philosophy, logic, mathematics and Arabic and Persian literatures. He learnt Arabic and *Maaqulaat* (Probabilities) under him. From Azamgarh he went to Rampur for studies in the Madrasah of Moulvi A'bdul Haq, and learnt a few books on theology from Moulvi Irshad Hussain. He went to Lahore to Moulvi Faizul Hasan who was deeply versed in Arabic literature. Shibli read *Hamasa* with him. From Lahore he went to Saharanpur where he studied *Hadis* under Moulvi Ahmad Ali. In 1876 A. D. when he was only 19 years of age he went to Mecca for a pilgrimage and wrote a qasida and qita in Persian as a devotional exercise. After his return to Azamgarh he continued to carry on his studies privately at a bookseller's shop. He practised poetry in Urdu and Persian and took a keen part in *mushairas*. He also wrote a few pamphlets to refute Wahabism and in support of Hanafism in Persian and Arabic, the most notable being *Iskat-ul-Muatdi* in Arabic. He also gave lessons to students. He enrolled himself as a pleader, after passing the law examination, and practised for a short time in the Courts of Azamgarh and Basti. Finding the profession of law not congenial to his taste he gave it up and sought Government service as a Amin. He found the duties too onerous and the avocation unsuitable to his temperament and he resigned. He set himself up as a free lance in literature. He happened to go to Aligarh in 1882 A. D. to see his younger brother Mahdi who was then studying in the College. He sought introduction to Moulvi Sami Ullah Khan through Khan Bahadur Mohammad Karim, Deputy Collector, and was put up as a candidate for the post of a Professor of Persian before Sir Syed with a high recommendation. He was finally selected and he resided in the same compound in which the bungalow of Sir Syed stood after having lived for some time in the city.

Stay at Aligarh. 1882-1898 A. D.

The constant associations with Sir Syed, the literary talks and discussions there, the society of other learned men especially Hali and the beautiful library of Sir Syed helped to flower Shibli's genius. He came in contact with Professor Arnold who was a great admirer of Eastern languages and culture especially Arabic and Persian. It was through him that Shibli imbibed Western

principles of criticism and became alive to the defects of oriental learning. He came to realise its weaknesses and its shortcomings when tested on the touch-stone of modern principles of criticism. He learnt a little French from Professor Arnold and taught him Arabic in return. Arnold's 'Preaching of Islam' thus owes something to Shibli.

The commencement of his useful literary career.

It was in Aligarh that Shibli conceived the idea of writing about the glories and the splendid achievements of Islam in the past. He was encouraged by Sir Syed in this self-imposed task. The atmosphere was quite congenial. He was fully equipped for the task. He had an excellent library at hand which contained books published even in distant places like Egypt and Syria. He commenced his career with short pamphlets and national poems. '*Subah-Umeed* (the Dawn of Hope), a Masnavi in Urdu, written in 1884 A. D., records about the slumbering and lethargy of Mohammadans and the efforts of Sir Syed to rouse them. It was once very popular with the students of Aligarh College who used to recite the poem frequently on occasions in the same manner as Shibli. He wrote an essay on 'The old education of the Mohammadans' which he read in 1887 A. D. in one of the sessions of Mohammadan Educational Conference which came into existence in 1886 A. D. It embodies some research and scholarship on his part and was greatly appreciated. Being encouraged in his work by the public and Sir Syed, and being led on by his own creative impulse, Shibli thought of writing a history of the Islamic cities and a history of the Abbasside Caliphs. He, however, decided to commence with the series entitled 'Heroes of Islam', a title having been suggested by a similar series in English. He wrote *Almamun*. In 1892 A. D. he finished *Sirat-ul-Naiman* and was launching himself on *Al Faruq* when in the same year he undertook a journey of six months to Constantinople in the company of Professor Arnold and also visited Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt. The object was to gather material for *Al Faruq* and to see for himself Islamic countries of which he was writing about. He published his *Safarnama* "Book of Travels" describing his impressions. It forms an interesting reading. In 1898 A. D. on the death of Sir Syed, Shibli severed his connections with the College and resigned his post. He returned to Azamgarh and engaged himself in the preparation of *Al Faruq* and in advancing the cause of a National English School there which he founded in 1883. In 1899 A. D. Shibli went to Kashmir for a change of air but fell ill there. *Al Faruq* was completed in the illness and was published from that place.

Stay at Hyderabad.

He went to Hyderabad when Nawab Wiqar-ul-Umra was the Prime Minister. Syed Ali Bilgrami employed Shibli in the Education Department as a

Nazim on a salary of rupees two hundred which was subsequently raised to rupees three hundred. Shibli stayed about four years and spent his time in effecting improvements in the Department, in writing and compiling his books and in carrying on his research work. Syed Ali Bilgrami had established the 'Asafia Series' and the works of Shibli were included therein. During the time of Moulvi Aziz Mirza, Shibli drew up a scheme of an Oriental University. During his stay at Hyderabad *Alghazali Sawanah Rumi* or Life of Moulana Rum, *Ilmul Kalam*, *Alkalam*, and *Mawazana Anis-o-Dabir* or the comparison and contrast of Anis and Dabir, were written and published on their order. During his stay at Hyderabad he was lamed for life owing to an accidental firing of the gun by his daughter-in-law while he was sitting in the Zenana.

Stay at Lucknow-Nadwat-ul-Ulema.

The institution of Nadwat-ul-Ulema was founded in 1894 A. D. in order to revise and reform the curricula of the Arabic schools and to remove the dissensions prevailing amongst the Ulemas or divines of the Mohammadans. The idea originated with Moulvi Abdul Ghafoor, Deputy Collector, and a society with the name of Nadwat-ul-Ulema was founded mainly through the exertions of Moulana Mohammad Ali of Cawnpore who was its first Secretary and the most enthusiastic worker. Shibli and Abdul Haq of Delhi also took a leading part in framing rules and regulations. Mohammad Ali collected funds and enlisted the sympathy of Wiqar-ul-Mulk who gave a monthly donation of rupees one hundred. Sir Syed and Mohsin-ul-Mulk supported it and gave encouragement. Shibli suggested that a school on the new lines should be established which could impart education to suit the needs of the times and circulated his draft which was approved and adopted in 1313 A. H. at Bareilly. In 1898 A. D. some lower classes of the *Darul Ulum* as the new school came to be known were opened. In 1899 A. D. Nadwa was endowed with a village and a library. It however came under a cloud at the time of Sir Anthony Macdonald the Lt.-Governor of United Provinces who was led to suspect it as a centre of political and mischievous activities. The pamphlets of Ahmad Raza Khan couched in vigorous language and directed against the Nadwa still further darkened the atmosphere. After the retirement of Sir Anthony, Shibli repaired to Lucknow from Hyderabad in 1904 A. D. and took the affairs in his own hand. Misapprehensions and misconceptions had to be dispelled and the intervention of Colonel Abdul Majid of Patiala was sought to clear the atmosphere. The finances were at their lowest ebb, and the progress of the Nadwa was an onward march to bankruptcy. Shibli toured in Rampur and Bhopal and got yearly aid of Rs. 500 and Rs. 250 respectively. He enlisted the sympathies of His Highness the Agha Khan who

gave an annual aid of Rs. 500. The grandmother of the then Nawab of Bhawalpur gave Rs. 50,000 towards the cost of the building and the foundation stone was laid in 1909 at Lucknow where a suitable site had been assigned by the Government who also gave some financial aid. Thus Shibli's exertions saved the Nadwa from a premature grave. Dissensions however continued to be rampant as the old Ulemas could not be brought in a line. They also regarded Shibli with suspicion and distrust for his lax and unorthodox ways. Shibli's criticism of all that they deeply venerated also alienated their sympathies. He retired in 1913 A. D. in sorrow to Azamgarh and busied himself to form what came to be known as Darul-Musannafin or Shibli's Academy of Letters.

Achievement of the Nadwa.

The achievement of the Nadwa though it may not be said to have attained maturity are numerous and its objects most laudable. It caused a stir in the dovecotes of old and rusty Ulemas who were utterly deaf to the needs of the times. Old curricula were revised to enable the Ulemas to keep abreast of the progress of modern thought. The Nadwa insisted on the knowledge of English as a language. Old useless branches of learning were relegated to the background and greater stress was laid on Arabic and Persian literature, Commentaries and Traditions. It revived Arabic learning and interpreted rightly the Moslem culture to the world. The Nadwa collected precious manuscripts and books and it boasts of a good library. It undertook an authoritative translation of the Quran into English. It tried to correct historical mistakes pertaining to the Muhammadan period in India. It offered to regulate the decisions of important law points relating to inheritance and Wakf of Mohammadans. It set up a centre of Moslem culture and learning which influenced even distant countries. It issued a magazine entitled *Alnadwa* under the joint editorship of Shibli and Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani which published many learned articles disclosing scholarship and research. With the retirement and death of Shibli the Nadwa had decayed and efforts are now being made to rejuvenate it.

Darul Musannafin at Azamgarh. 1913 A. D.

Shibli, after his retirement to Azamgarh, busied himself with his *magnum opus* Sirat-i-Nabwi and other works chiefly the last volume of *Shairul Ajam.* He also devoted himself to the cause of education. The scheme of founding an Academy for authors was dear to his heart and he made a wakf of his house, garden and his library. He also opened a Darul Takmil to impart the highest education to advanced students in Literature and the literary executors of Shibli, Maulanas Shah Suleiman and Hamid-ud-din did much to bring the idea to fruition.

In 1892 the Sultan of Turkey decorated him with the Majidia medal. In 1892 the British Government bestowed on him the title of Shams-ul-Ulema. He was also made a Fellow of Allahabad University. In 1911 he was a member of the Committee for the advancement of Oriental learning which assembled at Simla under the Presidency of Sir Harcourt Butler. He was also a valued member of various other committees, the committee on the controversy of Urdu and Hindi and the committee for Hindu-Muslim Unity convened by the Government.

Public and Government recognition of his talents and services.

Shibli, as a man, was sincere and courteous. He was a staunch friend and a strong foe. He had a forceful personality. His conversation was brilliant and replete with choice bits of knowledge. He never hankered after money and spent freely all that he got. He always strove to promote unity between Hindus and Mohammadans.

Shibli, the man.

Shibli was a prolific writer and the following works owe their existence to him:—

His works.

1. Shairul Ajam in five volumes.
2. Sirat-ul-Nabi in two volumes.
3. Al-Faruq.
4. Al-Kalam.
5. Al-Mamun.
6. Sirat-ul-Naiman.
7. Miqalat-i-Shibli.
8. Mazamin-i-Alamgir.
9. Makatib-i-Shibli.
10. Diwan-i-Shibli.
11. Dasta-i-Gul.
12. Rasail Shibli.
13. Masnavi Subeh-Umeed.
14. Collection of Urdu poems.
15. Muwazana Dabir-o-Anis.
16. Alghazali.
17. Maulana Rum.
18. Safarnama Rum, Misr-o-Sham.
19. Musalmanon ki Guzishta Talim.
20. Al-jazia.
21. Tarikh Islam.
22. Philsafa Islam.
23. Ilmul-Kalam.
24. A Criticism of Jaiji Zaidan.
25. Hayat-i-Khusru.

Shibli's great claim to be remembered is that he brought home the past glories of Islam and reconstructed Moslem history on a new basis. He brought considerable scholarship and research to bear on the subject and followed the modern principles of criticism discriminating his material. Al-Faruq, Al-Kalam, Al-Mamun, Al-Ghazali, Sirat-ul-Naiman, Mazamin-i-Alamgir, Musalmanon ki Guzashta Talim, Tarikh-i-Islam. Al-Jazia and Sirat-i-Nabi which he left unfinished bear eloquent testimony to his profound knowledge, fine taste, great discrimination, indefatigable labours and untiring patience.

Shibli as a historian.

Shibli as a literary critic.

As a literary critic Shibli ranks equally high. Being a poet himself he was highly endowed with this gift and his discernment, judgment, and taste were unerring and of a very high order. His *Shairul-Ajam* in five bulky volumes is a monument of his scholarship, extensive reading and research. It is true that he has erred and that flaws are detected but they are comparatively few and do not detract from his merit as a great critic. Professor Browne has laid it under contribution. It is a comprehensive survey of Persian literature and is written in fine flowing and easy Urdu. The last volume was published posthumously. Muwazana Anis and Dabir is another valuable contribution to Urdu literature and though some of his views may not be subscribed to, yet, his opinions and criticisms are just on the whole. Maulana Rum is another admirable book.

As a writer of belles lettres.

Shibli was a delightful writer of short essays and his articles were always read with delectation and interest. They were light, literary and instructive. His letters are also interesting and cast sidelight on his personality, works and time. *Miqalat-i-Shibli* and *Rasail-i-Shibli* contain his contributions to magazines. *Makatib-i-Shibli* is a collection of his letters.

As a poet.

Shibli wrote copiously in Persian and Urdu. He had attained to a considerable proficiency in Persian in which he could compose with great ease and fluency. He had no *ustad* but depended on his own taste and reading. He never took to poetry as an avocation but composed only when he was impelled to do so by his emotions. In Persian he had perfect mastery over the language and could intercalate Arabic verses with ease and elegance. His Persian qasidas have been published under the title of *Diwan-i-Shibli*. *Dasta-i-Gul* and *Bu-i-Gul* are his collections of Persian ghazals which were published in 1908 and are characterised by perfect mastery, beauty of thought, purity of idiom, elegance of diction, power of appeal, and spontaneity. Shibli mainly wrote Persian verses. Latterly he began to write in Urdu on social, political and ethical subjects some of which were controversial in nature. He was the first to write the historical qita. He wrote topical qitas for *Al-Hilal*. His political qitas relate to Muslim University, Muslim League, Balkan War and Cawnpore Mosque riot. His Urdu verses have been collected under the title of *Majmua-i-Kalam-i-Shibli*. His elegy on the death of his brother Ishaq Khan is very poignant. *Subah Umeed* has already been noticed above. Shibli paid great attention to his words and colour is the keynote of his verses. His Persian poems are outside the scope of Urdu literature and the Urdu verses are negligible.

Shibli's style.

Shibli's style is noted for its ease, simplicity, plainness and perspicuity. He is never obscure and his articles are noted for their luminosity. Sir Syed complimented him by writing about his style that it was the envy of the scholars of Delhi and Lucknow (the homes of Urdu). He seldom lays his imageries and figures of speech too thick. Although it rises to the heights of eloquence occasionally yet it serves its purpose very well. It is well adapted to the subjects in hand and is worthy of great praise. It may appear bald and jejune to those who love the flavour of Azad but it is an excellent example of business-like prose which is the greatest creation of the last century.

His position.

Shibli has a very great name for himself. As a historian and a critic of conspicuous ability he ranks very high. He did much to advance the cause of Muslim culture. In him is seen the new spirit of nationalism. He unites in himself the learning of the East with the light of the West. He was the mainspring of activities of the Nadwa and is the founder of Darul Musannafin. He is a towering personality of his age whose influence is perpetuated in his academy at Azamgarh and whose name is kept alive by his creditable pupils.

Syed Suleiman Nadvi.

Maulana Syed Suleiman Nadvi is the successor of Maulana Shibli. He is deeply versed in the oriental lore and is a great Arabic and Persian scholar. He was the pet pupil of Shibli and even in his lifetime he commanded respect by his scholarship. He has carried on the work and traditions of Shibli. Under Syed Suleiman's guidance, the Darul-Musannafin is doing creditable work, interpreting in Urdu, the Muslim culture hitherto treasured in Arabic and Persian tomes. He is the editor of the *Muarif*, a high class Urdu magazine devoted mainly to Muslim learning. It contains articles showing scholarship and research. Syed Suleiman is the guiding spirit of the Shibli's Academy and the *Muarif*. Syed Suleiman also made a tour of the Islamic countries and Europe. He has finished and published the Life of the Prophet a work left incomplete by Shibli. He is also the author of *Sirat-i-Ayesha*, *Arzul Quran*, *Lughat-i-Jadida* and some other brochures.

Other writers of the Academy.

Other writers of note who belong to the Academy either directly or indirectly are:—Maulana Hamid-uddin, Maulana Abdul Bari, Maulvi Abdul Majid, Professor Nawab Ali, Maulana Abdus Salaam, and Maulana Abdul Hai. Hamiduddin is a great Persian and Arabic scholar and has a profound knowledge of the Orientalia. He has written many works chiefly concerned with the Quran and

Arabic literature. Maulana Abdul Bari deserves mention for his admirable and lucid translations of the philosophical works of Berkeley. Maulvi Abdul Majid is a most remarkable writer with a graceful style and is an adept in translating ethical and philosophical works and in writing original works on philosophy, psychology and ethics.

Abdus Salaam.

Maulana Abdus Salaam is a scholar who contributes copiously to the Muarif on a variety of subjects and is an asset to the Academy. One of his notable works is the life of Caliph Omar. His life of Shibli is not yet published. He is also the author of *Shairul Hind* which is a history of Urdu poetry and which aims at the study of the various movements and influences which dominated Urdu poetry. It is admirable in its own way. He wields a facile pen and has used his materials judiciously. He is rendering good service to the cause of Urdu literature. It must be admitted that the name is a misnomer and that the book is deficient in some essential respects, that it ignores the claims of some writers who have contributed to the advancement and greatness of Urdu poetry. Some of these alleged defects could be explained away by saying that it treats Urdu poetry from a particular standpoint. On the whole it is a remarkable work of no mean merit. Abdul Hai's *Gul-i-Rana*—a history of Urdu poetry on the old lines has some distinctive features of its own.

Darul Musannafin.

The Darul Musannafin has a very hopeful future before it and with improvement can be turned into a very useful institution of first-rate importance which could exercise considerable influence on the destiny of Urdu. It must guard against the too ready temptation of Persianising Urdu too much and thus alienating the sympathies of true Urdu lovers and of narrowing the field of its activity by confining only to the Islamic learning to the neglect of Indian and Western culture.

Zakaullah, 1882-1910 A. D.

Shams-ul-Ulema Maulvi Mohammad Zakaullah, one of the most distinguished students of the old Delhi College, dedicated his life for education and uplift of Indian boys. He was born in 1832 A. D. in Delhi and was the son of Hafiz Sanaullah, the tutor of Mirza Kochak Sultan, the youngest son of Emperor Bahadur Shah. He entered the College at the age of twelve along with Moulvi Nazir Ahmad and Maulana Azad. They were class-fellows and maintained their friendship all their lives. All were honoured with the title of Shams-ul-Ulema by the Government. After finishing his studies Zakaullah was appointed a teacher of Mathematics in that very College. Afterwards he was appointed a Professor of Persian and Urdu in Agra College. He worked

as a teacher and Professor for a period of seven years. In 1855 A. D. he was appointed a Deputy Inspector of Schools and was stationed at Bulandshahr and Moradabad. He remained on this post for 11 years. In 1869 A. D. he was appointed a Head Teacher of Delhi Normal School. In 1872 A. D. he was selected as a Professor for Oriental College, but before he could take up charge he was appointed a Professor in Muir Central College, Allahabad, where he taught Persian and Arabic to the highest classes. He retired after a service of 36 years and was a pensioner for 24 years. He died in 1910 A. D.

His works.

His literary activities extended over a considerable period of time (1854 to 1910 A. D.) and covered a multitude of subjects. He was a most prolific writer. His published and unpublished works small and great in Mathematics, History and Geography, Literature and Ethics, Physics and Chemistry and Politics number more than 143. These books are mostly written for the benefit of school boys and do not pertain to the domain of literature either in subject, or in artistic treatment. He is distinguished as a mathematician, a translator and a historian. He was no advanced student of Mathematics but confined his efforts in translating into Urdu, school and college text-books which were in English and in writing their 'Keys.' As a historian Zakaullah has supplied a distinct want. His *Tarikh-i-Hindustan* or history of India in 10 bulky volumes relating to the Mohammadan pericd is a creditable performance in Urdu. It is more of a popular than a research work. *Mohimmat-i-Azim*, the Great Wars, is an account of wars between the English and other countries except India during the reign of Queen Victoria. Another book worthy of notice is a history of the British Rule in India during the reign of Queen Victoria, in three volumes. He is also the author of *Ain-i-Qaisiri* an account of administrative changes and progress of India during the reign of Queen Victoria *Farhang-i-Farang ki Tarikh*, a history of European Civilization and a life of Queen Victoria and Prince Consort. To him is also due the life of Moulvi Samiullah Khan, C. M. G., one of the active workers in the mission of Sir Syed Ahmad. Towards the end of his life he was engaged in preparing a history of Islam, a stupendous task. The style of these books is simple, clear, lucid and easy with no great attempt at artistic beauty. They are all written in business like prose suitable to the treatment of utilitarian type of books and subjects mainly taught in schools.

As a publicist and a contributor to the monthlies.

As a publicist Zakaullah was equally untiring. He regularly and unfailingly contributed to the newspapers and monthlies of the time such as the *Risala-i-Hasan, Tahzeebul Akhlaq, Scientific Gazette,*

Aligarh, *Adib Firozabad*, *Makhzan*, *Zamana*, *Khatun*, Aligarh Monthly and various other periodicals. He used to write on a variety of subjects. Shams-ul-Ulema Hali once called the brain of Zakaullah an oilman's store which has everything in stock which was required. Unconsciously it also hinted at the quality of goods. They were no gems which could be treasured.

Recognition of his educational services.

His services obtained ready recognition from the Government. He got a robe of honour for his work to promote the cause of female education. For his proficiency in his work he got a reward of Rs. 1,500 and was honoured with the title of Khan Bahadur and Shams-ul-Ulema. He was a life-long and a devoted friend of Sir Syed and looked more to the practical side of education by providing suitable text-books which enjoyed considerable popularity for a very long time.

His position.

Zakaullah deserves an honourable mention for his numerous services as an educationist, as a historian and as an associate of Sir Syed in his noble mission. Zakaullah was never brilliant and never boasted of being a genius. His style is pedestrian. It was, however, admirably suited for the translations of mathematical and scientific subjects. He writes in sober, dignified prose which is lucid, simple and free from ornamentation. It is never involved nor is it virile nor eloquent.

The Delhi Renaissance.

With the advent of the nineteenth century a large number of books were translated from the Persian into Urdu. Urdu poetry flourished and the court of the Mughal Emperor Zafar in the Fort became the centre of this literary change which was to have such an important effect in Northern India as the century advanced. "The conditions in the city and its neighbourhood were far from being secure. There were foraging campaigns and lawlessness. Freebooters and marauders were in abundance. Inside the fort there were dissensions. The British protection which had begun in the year 1803 had established order. With the English Peace the looting and robbery in the open streets within the city walls was stopped and outside the city boundaries was rare." With the establishment of the Delhi College there was a remarkable outburst of brilliant intellectual life. Says Mrs. Andrews : " A great deal of this extraordinary efflorescence in the early nineteenth century was due to the newness of the English learning. It was like entering some magic and enchanted land. No one could tell what would be revealed next. The scientific experiments, above all, held them (the pupils of the Delhi College) spell-bound and the anticipations of new knowledge was always upon them. They felt themselves to be the pioneers of a new age and dreamt

dreams and saw visions. The Urdu literary Renaissance at Delhi gave a sudden illumination to the age, before it sunk back into dullness. There was also the great tradition of the past glory and lustre of the Moghul Rule. The light flickered and leapt up for a brief momentum before it died out. More than any other single cause, the Mutiny killed it."

The Delhi College produced many eminent pupils which were the finest product of the Delhi Renaissance and had far-reaching and important influence on the destiny of Urdu. Nazir Ahmad, Ashob, Azad, Hali, Ziauddin and Zakaullah were contemporaries and the chief founders of Modern Urdu Literature. Professor Ram Chandra and Maulana Imam Bakhsh were teachers in the College. Shahamat Ali became the prime minister at Indore and Makund Lal gained a high reputation as one of the first doctors of the modern type in Northern India. Dr. Chaman Lal embraced Christianity and was killed in the Mutiny.

In 1842 a literary society was established as an adjunct of the old Delhi College. Professor Ram Chandra and Sahbai were the moving spirits. The society is responsible for many compilations which were subsequently published in Delhi. They were intended to serve as text-books for the use of the students. Mostly they were translations from English and some from Persian. Other cities followed the example of Delhi. Agra, Lucknow and Benares also have some publications to their credit. The books of this period are found in the library of India Office and the details are given in the catalogue compiled by Blumhardt. These translations and compilations gave a great stimulus to Urdu prose and made it simple, direct and business-like. Another literary society was formed at Delhi in 1864 of which Rai Bahadur Master Peary Lal Ashob was the able secretary. Under its auspices many lectures were delivered and the lamp of Urdu though dim was kept alive. It was Ashob who helped and partly inspired Azad and Hali to inaugurate the modern Urdu poetry and supplied translations from English to Hali and himself compiled many Urdu text-books for the school.

Professor Ram Chandra.

Professor Ram Chandra was the brilliant professor of Mathematics in the old Delhi College. He became a Christian and he owed his conversion to the influence of Mr. Taylor, the Principal of the College. Ramchandra was amongst the first to enter the English School which developed into the Delhi College. 'His course was brilliant. He discovered a new mathematical formula and gained a European reputation as a mathematician.' Nazir Ahmad, Azad, Zakaullah and other notabilities of the age were his pupils. Zakaullah who had an aptitude for Mathematics in which subject he specialized

was his favourite pupil and a strong intellectual friendship grew up between them.

Professor Ram Chandra "was a man of fearless sincerity and very strong convictions. The fact that he had been obliged to break with all his Hindu relations, and to undergo much persecution when he became a Christian, had made him somewhat stern and abrupt in manner and often harshly controversial towards others ; but he had a deeply affectionate heart and was upright in his actions."

During the mutiny his life was in danger but one of his pupils warned him beforehand and after remaining for some days in hiding in the heart of the city he managed to leave it in disguise. When peace was restored Ram Chandra returned to the city and helped his friends by securing them military passports to enable them to come to the city.

It is said that Professor Ram Chandra became a Director of Public Instruction in Patiala State. He is the author of a book entitled *Tazkarat-ul-Kamlin* in which he has written the lives of the celebrities of Rome and Greece which he compiled from English and Arabic sources. The book was first published by him in 1849 A.D. and in 1487 by the Nawal Kishore Press. It also contains an account of some English philosophers and poets, Persian poets and some Hindu notabilities such as Valmik, Shankaracharya and Bhaskar the Mathematician. Professor Ram Chandra is also the author of *Usul-Ilm-Hayyit* (Principles of Geometry) and *Ajaib-i-Rozgar* (Wonders of the World) which he wrote in 1847-1848 A.D. The language is fluent and simple. Specimens are given by Tanha in his book entitled *Sairul Musannafin.*

The Delhi College.

An English class was opened in Delhi in 1827 A.D. Despite the prejudices against English the enrolment was encouraging for there were as many as 300 students reading English as early as 1831 A. D. The school was first located near the Ajmere Gate ; but the old Delhi College which grew out of the old school was situated not far from the Kashmere Gate and the river Jumna. About 1843 the school buildings were transferred from Ajmere Gate to the Royal Library. To encourage the new learning and to overcome the prejudice which was reigning strong against English lavish Government scholarships were offered and a free education was given. Even then, very few would accept the professed aid.

The old Delhi College had its Oriental Department and a department for Western science. The Mathematical side was strongly developed. English literature was not very popular but Western science and Mathematics made a powerful appeal. These subjects were taught from lectures, not from books for English books were not easily procurable as they were obtained from the

Calcutta School Book Society and no Vernacular text-books had been compiled in these subjects. These lectures were eagerly followed for "it was like entering a new and undiscovered hemisphere of knowledge to be taught altogether new Mathematical subjects, to be allowed to try experiments with the new chemical gases, and the new science of magnetism or electricity which was just coming to the fore." Professor Ram Chandra was an outstanding personality. Mr. F. Taylor, the Principal, was a remarkable man and had considerable influence with his pupils. Pandit Ajodhia Prasad, a Kashmiri Brahmin of Delhi, was assistant professor. The oriental department with its classes in Arabic and Persian taught through the medium of Urdu was very popular and attracted many pupils. Maulvi Imam Buluh Sahbai was the eminent professor of Persian. He was a profound scholar and maintained a high standard. Both Taylor and Imam Buksh were tragically killed during the Mutiny.

Imam Buksh Sahbai.

Maulvi Imam Buksh with the poetical appellation ot Sahbai was a distinguished scholar of Persian and Arabic and a professor in the Old Delhi College. He was a man of high moral character and liberal culture. His knowledge of Persian was profound and he wielded considerable influence even in those days when proficiency in Persian was of a high order. He gave considerable help to Sir Syed Ahmad in writing *Asar-us-Sanadid*, on the Archælogy of Delhi. He was greatly loved by his pupils and his personality made deep impressions on them. He was a famous Ustad and corrected the poems of the princes and nobles connected with the court of Zafar in the Fort, He is the author of a tazkira which is of some value. He was killed in the military firing that took place in his quarter in the Mutiny and his house was rased to the ground.

Ghulam Imam Shahid.

Maulana Ghulam Imam Shahid was the son of Shah Ghulam Mohammad and a resident of Amethi in the district of Lucknow. He was a famous poet and a devoted writer of the *Naat*. He was known by the appellation of *Maddah Nabi* (chanter of the praises of the Prophet) and *Ashiq-i-Rasul* (worshipper of the Prophet). In poetry he was the pupil of Qateel and Mushaffi. In Persian prose and poetry he was the pupil of Agha Syed Ismail Mazindrani. He was a *peshkar* in Allahabad. After his retirement he received a stipend of rupees four hundred and thirty from the Nizam upto the end of his life. He had numerous disciples in the neighbourhood of Lucknow, in Allahabad, Hyderabad Deccan, Moradabad, Rampur and Agra. He was held in high esteem and Sir Salar Jung I, Nawab Kalb Ali Khan and other nobles treated him with great consideration.

He wrote Urdu prose and poetry with distinction. He is the author of *Majmua-i-Milad-i-Sharif*, *Insha-i-Bahar-i-Bekhizan* and a collection of qasidas and ghazals. His famous description

of Taj Ganj of Agra is a classic and the best example of imaginative and ornate prose.

Ghulam Ghaus Bekhabar, born 1240 A. H.

Khwaja Ghulam Ghaus poetically surnamed Bekhabar originally belonged to Kashmir where his ancestors held high posts of honour. His father Khwaja Huzurullah migrated to Tibet and from there to Nepal. Bekhabar was thus born in 1240 A. H. in Nepal but he with his family came to Benares when he was only four years of age. He received his education there and in 1840 A. D. entered service as a deputy of his maternal uncle Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed Mohammad Khan Mir Munshi of the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces. He accompanied Lord Ellenborough when he invaded Gwalior and received a *khillat* at the termination of the war. He worked as a Mir Munshi in place of his maternal uncle. In 1885 he retired after a long and meritorious service of 45 years. He was the recipient of many honours—was made a Khan Bahadur, was awarded the Kaiser-Hind Gold Medal and *khillats.* He was a great friend of Ghalib and Ghalib has addressed him many letters. He is the author of *Fughan-i-Bekhabar* and *Khunaba-i-Jigar.* He died in 1905 at a very old age. His review or *Taqriz* of Shahid's *Insha-i-Bekhabar* is unadulterated flattery and is written *ala mode.* Bekhabar writes usually in simple and clear prose. His reviews, however, are written in rhymed prose with a plethora of similes, metaphors and other figures of speech.

Wiqar-ul-Mulk, 1839-1917.

Maulvi Mushtaq Husain, son of Sheikh Fazal Husain, was born in a village near Amroha (U. P.) in a Kamboh family. In 1859 he became an assistant teacher and worked in the famine operations of Amroha. He gradually rose to be the Sireshtedar and Munsarim of Sadar-us-Sudur and worked under Sir Syed. He subsequently became a Naib Tahsildar and was recommended strongly by Sir Syed for employment in Hyderabad State. Sir Salar appointed him as Nazim Dewani and he, by dint of honesty, industry and ability, worked his way up and secured the confidence of the highest officers. As a result of party cliques he had to leave Hyderabad but was soon recalled and effected many reforms. In 1890 he got the titles of Wiqar-ud-daulah, Wiqar-ul-Mulk. In 1891 he retired from state service and devoted himself to the uplift of his community and in the advancement of education and betterment of the College. In 1866 Wiqar-ul-Mulk became a member of the Scientific Society and was entrusted with the management of the society and the *Tahzeebul Ikhlaq*, to which he used to contribute copiously. His articles however were seldom literary but were mostly on religious and social subjects. He translated French Revolution and Napoleon under the title of *Sarghuzisht-i-Napolean Bonaparte* with the help of Munshi

Gulzari Lal and Babu Ganga Prasad and it was published in1871 in the Newal Kishore Press. Wiqar-ul-Mulk was a coadjutor of Sir Syed and is noticed here only for his influence which was indirect, on the development of Urdu in that period.

Chirag Ali. 1844-1895 A. D.

Nawab Azam Yar Jang Bahadur Maulvi Chirag Ali was born about 1844 A. D. His father was Maulvi Mohammad Bakhsh who commenced his service as a clerk at Meerut and afterwards became a Head Clerk in the Collectorate at Saharanpur. In 1849 A. D. Maulvi Mohammad Bakhsh who was known as Kirani 'Christian' for his service under the English, was selected for settlement work in the Punjab where he rose rapidly to the post of a Settlement Officer. He died very early in 1856 A. D. at the age of about 35 years leaving four sons the eldest being Chirag Ali.

Chirag Ali received education at Meerut and accepted a post of a subordinate clerk on Rs. 20 in the Treasury at Basti in the United Provinces. In 1872 A. D. he came to Lucknow and became a Deputy Munsarim in the Court of the Judicial Commissioner, Lucknow, who was a patron of his father. He went to Sitapur as Tahsildar. In 1876 A. D. He went to Aligarh and did some work for the Nizam at the request of Sir Syed. In 1877 A. D. he was selected for service in Hyderabad on the recommendation of Sir Syed and was appointed an Assistant Revenue Secretary under Mosinul Mulk on a pay of Rs. 400 which was subsequently raised to Rs. 700 and ultimately he rose to the post of Revenue and Political Secretary on a pay of Rs. 1,500. He died in 1895 A D.

He was impartial and without prejudice and held strong views. He had abundance of moral courage and was extremely straightforward. He was a voracious reader and used to send for books even from distant land of Egypt and Syria. From the very beginning he used to contribute to the newspapers. Theology and religion were his *forte*. He used to battle with the Christian missionaries who found faults in Islam and used to expound the principles of his own religion. His whole life was a life of self-study and steady devotion to his principles. He was a self-made man.

The following is the list of his works :—

1. Budget Report.
2. Administration Report.
3. Hyderabad Deccan under Sir Salar Jang.
4. Jagirat and Jagirdaran.
5. Taliqat.
6. Tahqiqul Jehad.
7. Reforms under Muslim Rule.
8. Mohammad the True Prophet.
9. Islam ki Dunyawi Barkaten.
10. Qadim Qaumon ki Mukhtasar Tarikh.
11. Articles in Tahzeebul Akhlaq and other newspapers.

Some of these books are written in English. Besides, he wrote many pamphlets in Urdu and English on various controversial subjects. His letters have also been published under the title of *Majmua-i-Rasail.* Chirag Ali was a great debater and controversialist. His knowledge was very great and profound. 'He used to write with cold reason as his guide and scholarship as his slave.' His rejoinders were always literary in character and authoritative in exposition. His style is vigorous and remarkable though his works do not strictly pertain to the domain of literature being polemical in character yet Chirag Ali is remembered for his exertions in the cause of the uplift of Mohammadans, development of Urdu and as a trusty lieutenant of Sir Syed.

Syed Ali Bilgrami. (1851-1911 A. D.)

Shams-ul-Ulema Doctor Syed Ali Bilgrami came of a noble and distinguished stock of Bilgram. His family has always been noted for scholarship. It has occupied a very high position in society. After a dazzling career as a student in India he was sent to Europe by Sir Salar Jang where he achieved greater distinction. He was a great oriental scholar knowing Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit. He also had considerable proficiency in most of the old and modern European languages. Besides, he knew Bengali, Marathi, Telagu. Urdu was his mother-tongue. His career in Hyderabad, England and Hardoi need not detain us as it does not strictly pertain to the domain of Urdu literature. Syed Ali Bilgrami is known for his translation of Le Bon's work 'Civilization of Arabia' under the title of *Tamaddun-i-Arab* and the translation of 'Civilization of India' under the title of *Tamaddun-i-Hind.* He also translated Medical Jurisprudence. Besides his literary activities he took considerable interest in Aligarh College movement. His two translations have secured for him a place amongst the Urdu writers of that period. They show considerable scholarship and a distinct mastery over language and subject.

Syed Hussain Bilgrami.

Side by side a mention must be made of his distinguished brother Honourable Moulvi Syed Hussain Bilgrami, C. I. E., Nawab Umad-ul-Mulk Bahadur who though eclipsed by his younger brother in academic and literary career outshone him in public and political life. After holding various responsible and important posts at Hyderabad he was finally translated into the Secretary of State's Council. His essays and addresses at Aligarh Conference collected in *Rasail Umad-ul-Mulk,* being mainly in Urdu are his chief claim to a position in Urdu literature. The work extends to four hundred pages and contains an exposition of his views on various subjects chiefly advancement of education. His

essay on "Hawa aur Pani" (Air and Water) is remarkably learned and free from technicalities. The institution of Dairut-ul-Muarif which was designed to publish rare and useful Arabic books on religion, was mainly due to his exertion. He also spent a good deal of his time in translating the Quran into Urdu.

Mohammad Aziz Mirza (1865 A.D. – 1912 A. D.)

Maulvi Mohammad Mirza, B. A., is one of the notable modern writers of Urdu. After graduating from Aligarh College in 1875 A. D. he sought service in Hyderabad where he held many responsible posts. After a chequered career marked with success, he rose to the position of Home Secretary and High Court Judge having previously served in the subordinate capacities in the Secretariat and Revenue Department. During the tenure of his office he carried on his studies and never slackened his literary activities. He translated the journal of Nawab Fateh Jang Moulvi Mahdi Ali which had been written in English, under the title of *Gulgasht-i-Farang.* It describes the Nawab's journey to England. The translation is simple, fluent and literary. He also wrote a life of the great prime minister of the Bahamani Kings, Khwaja Mohammad Gawan, after a great deal of research and named it *Siratul Mahmud.* He also translated the famous drama of Kalidas, *Vikram Urvasi*, into Urdu through its Marathi translation. The translation is rendered with great skill and scholarship and the introduction contains a mass of useful information about Sanskrit drama and the nature of Drama. He was deeply interested in the study of numismatics and his collection of coins was varied and great. He contributed copiously to the magazines and many of his interesting articles have been published under the title of *Khayalat-i-Aziz.* His activities for the advancement of Aligarh College and Muslim education were great and numerous. After his retirement in 1909 A. D. he became a General Secretary of the All-India Muslim League and did much useful work. He died in 1919 A. D. His style is clear, simple and perspicuous. He avoids verbosity and prolixity. He is one of the notable writers of the period.

Syed Ahmad Dehlvi and his work.

Maulvi Syed Ahmad Dehlvi is best known to the Urdu-knowing world by his authoritative and voluminous lexicon in that language. He was born at Delhi in 1846 A.D. and was the son of Hafiz Syed Abdul Rahman. He came of good stock. After receiving education at the homes of learned Maulvis and attending different Government Schools and Delhi Normal School he finished it by self-study and by constant associations with the famous scholars, and poets of the time. He began his career as a writer very early. When he was a student he composed a

Persian poem called *Tifli Namah* (Book of Childhood) and a letter-writer entitled *Taqwiat-ul-Sibyan* (or Aid to the Children). In 1869 A.D. he published a book entitled *Kanzul Fawaid* on which Government was pleased to sanction a reward of Rs. 200. From 1868 A.D. he began to collect materials for his projected work, his *magnum opus* a standard and exhaustive Urdu Dictionary. In 1871 A.D. he published *Waqai Darunia* which earned another reward of Rs. 150. This enabled him to carry on the grand work in hand. In the meantime Doctor S. W. Fallon, Inspector of Schools, Behar, invited him to help him in his preparation of Anglo-Urdu Dictionary. He consented and finished it after a labour of 7 years, carrying on his own work side by side. In 1880 A.D. he was invited to write the book of travels of Maharaja of Alwar which he did creditably. He was appointed an Assistant Translator in the Government Book Depot, Punjab. During his stay with Doctor Fallon he published his *Hadi-ul-Nissa* a book on female education, which attained to considerable popularity. He also wrote *Takmil-ul-Kalam* dealing with the patois of the artisans; *Tahqiq-ul-Kalam* about the subtleties of the Urdu language; *Raskhan* containing a collection of the best Hindi couplets, enigmas and songs; *Reet Bakhan* about the customs in the best Hindu families; *Nari Katha* about the language of Hindu ladies; *Qawaid Urdu* and *Lughat-ul-Nisa.* Amongst his published works may be mentioned *Tahrir-ul-Nisa* a reader for girls, *Bi Rahat Zamani ka Qissa*, on the value of time, *Ikhlaqul Nisa*, a book on the care of infants, *Ilmul Nissa*, on language and its evolution, *Rasum Delhi*, on the customs prevalent in Delhi. Amongst his unpublished works may be named, '*Sair Shimla*' with the history of Simla, *Urdu Zarab-ul-Misal*, *Roz Marra Delhi*, *Rasum Ala Hinduan Delhi*, etc. Some of them are now being published.

Farhang-i-Asafia, 1892 A. D.

But Syed Ahmad's energies were absorbed by his ambitious Dictionary. Without monetary help he could not bear the burden of compilation and publication. And the long looked for opportunity presented itself. In 1888 A.D. Sir Asman Jah, the Chief Minister of Hyderabad, came to Simla where Syed Ahmad was the Head Maulvi of Simla High School. He sought an interview and presented his manuscript which after examination by Maulvi Syed Ali Bilgrami was accepted and a reward and a promise of help was given. It was finished in 1892 A.D. and was named *Farhang-i-Asafia*. Syed Ahmad went to Hyderabad four times, in 1890 A.D., 1893 A.D., 1895 A.D. and 1901 A.D. He got a reward of rupees five thousand and monthly stipend of rupees fifty. The Government of the Punjab similarly honoured him. It is a monument of research and learning and one of the few standard lexicons in Urdu literature.

His position.

Syed Ahmad did great service to Urdu literature by his stupendous work and has an established position amongst the writers of his age.

Maulvi Abdul Haq.

Amongst the Deccan band of scholars and writers the foremost name is that of Maulvi Abdul Haq, the talented editor of the *Urdu* and the able honorary secretary of the *Anjuman-i-Taraqqi Urdu.* He is the main spring of activities there and under his inspiration and guidance most useful work is being done. Under his editorship the Anjuman has published many admirable books both translations, original works and old classics. His introductions are informing and characterized by scholarship and research. His contributions are original and learned. He is probably the most dominant personality of the age. He has dedicated his life to the research in and to the promotion of Urdu literature. He has been able to unearth many old manuscripts and has thrown considerable light on the early history of Urdu poetry and language. He worked for long in the education department of the Nizam's dominions. Like all great people he is shy and modest and has declined to furnish the particulars of his life. As a critic he is impartial, independent and unswayed by prejudice. As a writer of Urdu he is in the front rank and the outstanding feature of his style is that he never rigorously excludes elegant Hindi words, but weaves them in the texture of his composition with grace. He, however, lacks the genius of Azad in the matter of style which occasionally is deficient in humour and sometimes sinks into baldness. But he has wondrous command over the language and has complete mastery over expression. His style resembles that of Hali but it is also an improvement on it. Not only is Abdul Haq, a first-rate critic, an able editor, a profound scholar, a keen research worker and a capable writer but he is a great influence who has inspired others.

Maulana Wahid-uddin Saleem.

One of the most outstanding personalities of the present age is Maulana Syed Wahid-uddin, poetically surnamed Saleem, son of Haji Farid-uddin. He belongs to a respectable family of Syeds which came and settled at Panipat, where his father was a *Mutwalli* of the richly endowed shrine of Bu Ali Shah Qalandar. After reading for some time in Government School, Panipat, and private studies in Persian and Arabic at home Saleem went to Lahore where he studied Arabic literature and commentary under Maulana Faizul Hasan Saharanpuri, the famous Arabic Professor in the Oriental College; theology, *hadis*, logic and philosophy under Maulana Abdulla Tonki and passed the Entrance examination in English and Munshi Fazil in Persian. He wished to take up law as a profession but he gave up the idea and accepted a post in the education department in

Bhawalpur State. After six years he came to Rampur as a Head Maulvi of the High School but remained only six months when his patron General Azimuddin Khan was killed. For six years he was ailing and placed himself under the treatment of a *Hakim* at Jullendar and also acquired knowledge of medicine. He then set himself up as a *Hakim* at Panipat with a dispensary. Hali then introduced Saleem to Sir Syed Ahmad who was very much impressed by his personality and erudition. Saleem worked as a literary assistant and helped Sir Syed generally in the work of compilation and journalism. He remained with him till Sir Syed's death when he started his magazine the *Muarif* which ran successfully for some time. He accepted the editorship of the *Aligarh Gazette* at the invitation of Nawab Mohsan-ul-Mulk but he gave it up after some years owing to ill-health. He was appointed editor of the *Muslim Gazette*, Lucknow, when his violent articles on the Cawnpur Mosque riot forced him to give up the post. He joined the staff of the *Zamindar* as a chief editor but the immoderation of the paper led to the forfeiture of the security and Saleem ceased connection with the paper. Saleem, however, had made a name for himself as a writer of trenchant and virile Urdu and he was invited to participate in the activities of the Bureau of Translation at Hyderabad Deccan where he wrote the epoch-marking *Wazah Istalahat*, a most notable and useful book. At the establishment of Osmania University Saleem was at first appointed an assistant professor of Urdu and after four years he was made a professor.

A a prose-writer Saleem is pre-eminent. The chief characteristics of his style are virility, lucidity, directness and vigour. Occasionally it shows depth of emotion and rises to heights of real eloquence. He has contributed to the *Muarif*, Aligarh, *Tahzeebul Ikhlaq*, *Institute Gazette*, Aligarh, Aligarh Monthly and *Urdu*, Hyderabad. His articles in the *Urdu* notably *Tulsi Das ki Shairi*, *Urdu Mythology*, and *Arab ki Shairi* are extremely readable, informing and valuable. Saleem had a long period of apprenticeship and his writings are marked with an ease, literary flavour, and simplicity which only comes with great practice. Another remarkable feature of his style is that he does not indulge in obscure Persian and Arabic works but with the freedom of Hali makes use of elegant Hindi works which he weaves adroitly in the texture of his writings. His masterly *Wazah Istalahat* shows his great learning and research and is a study of the structure of Urdu language and lays down wholesome principles for coining scientific and technical words and idioms.

As a poet Saleem is pre-eminent and has struck a new note.

Sheikh Abdul Qadir.

One of the greatest benefactors of Urdu who has an abiding place in its literature is Sheikh Abdul Qadir who was born at Ludhiana about

fifty-two years ago and who belongs to a highly respectable family of Qanungo Sheikhs. His father Sheikh Fateh-uddin was in service in the Revenue Department at Ludhiana but died when Abdul Qadir was only fifteen years of age. With a brilliant career at school and the Forman Christian College, Lucknow, from where he graduated in 1894 in first class he took to journalism and joined the *Punjab Observer* as Assistant Editor in 1895, of which he rose to be the Chief Editor in 1898. He remained there in the post till 1904 when he severed his connection owing to differences with the proprietor and went to England for the Bar. He remained there for three years and came in close contact with the public movements and personalities and his travels on the continent widened his horizon and broadened his mental outlook. He started his practice as an advocate at Delhi but moved to Lahore after two years. In 1911 he was appointed a Government Pleader and Public Prosecutor at Lyallpur. In 1920 he resigned the post and started his practice at Lahore where he got to the forefront at once. In 1921 he officiated as a Judge of the High Court and again he was appointed as an Additional Puisne Judge for a year. In 1923 he was elected as a Member of the Legislative Council, Punjab, and was elected the Deputy President and the President of the Council. In 1925 he was appointed Minister of Education to the Punjab Government as a temporary measure. In 1926 he was deputed as a Delegate of India to the seventh session of the League of Nations at Geneva. The brilliant promise of academic career was amply fulfilled by his subsequent dazzling professional, official and literary career.

Abdul Qadir developed a great taste for Urdu and while yet an under-graduate delivered a series of lectures in English on Modern writers of Urdu prose and poetry which has been published first in 1898 under the title of the New School of Urdu Literature and was widely appreciated. It was favourably noticed by Bishan Narayan Dar who, however, disagreed with some of the conclusions, observations and estimates of Abdul Qadir. In 1901 he started a monthly magazine in Urdu called the *Makhzan* which has rendered yeoman service to the cause of Urdu literature and has left a distinct mark on it. It was a training ground for the young writers whom it brought into prominence and led to the development of the language and enriching of its literature. Abdul Qadir remained its editor upto 1911 and an honorary editor till 1920. Various reprints of articles under the title of *Intikhab Makhzan* were made and prescribed as text-books. *Intikhab Makhzan* Part III, is a collection of all the articles from the pen of Abdul Qadir. In 1917 he presided over the Urdu Conference in Calcutta. He is the

president of the Anjuman-i-Arbab Ilm, Lahore, which has been founded with the noble aim of promoting the cause of Urdu literature.

As a writer of Urdu Abdul Qadir is noted for his directness, simplicity and business-like prose. As a critic he is sober, impartial and sympathetic.

Manohar Lal Zutshi, born 1876.

Pandit Manohar Lal Zutshi was born in 1876 in Fyzabad where his father Pandit Kanhaiya Lal Zutshi was employed in the Public Works Department. His father died in 1888. In 1894 he took his B. A. degree from the Canning College, Lucknow, and in 1897 he passed the Training College examination with distinction. He entered service as a teacher in the Educational Department. In 1902 he passed his M. A. and topped the list. From 1902 to 1910 he was employed as a professor in the Training College, Allahabad, and contributed articles in English in the *Hindustan Review* and in Urdu in the *Zamana Adib* and the *Kashmiri Darpan.* In 1916 after being a Head-master he was appointed as Inspector of Schools. He was also a registrar of the Benares University for a year and a Principal of the Training College for another year. In 1919 he was appointed Under-Secretary of the Local Government and in 1921 he was made an officiating Assistant Director of Public Instruction for a year. He is now the Principal of the Jubilee Intermediate College, Lucknow. He is the author of *Guldasta-i-Adab*, *Education in British India*, and has contributed articles on Ghalib, Chakbust, and has taken part in literary controversies. He is a great reader. He is a critic of high order. His reviews are just, impartial and full of merit. He is occasionally impatient with the old order of Urdu poetry and is unsparing in his animadversions against the conventional Urdu poets.

Maulvi Abdul Majid, born 1893 A. D.

Maulvi Abdul Majid of Dariyabad is the son of Maulvi Abdul Qadir, Deputy Collector, and born in 1893 A. D. He received early education in Arabic, Persian and Urdu at his own home and after reading English in Sitapur High School entered the Canning College where he graduated in 1912. He joined the Aligarh College for post-graduate studies but his father died and he had to give up studies. He came to Lucknow and took to journalism and literature. In 1917 he was appointed in the Translation Bureau of the Osmania University but he gave up the post. He was, however, persuaded to do literary work for the University and is now the recipient of a stipend from the Nizam's Government. He takes keen interest in politics and is a prominent figure in the political circles. He is the editor of the "*Sach*" (Truth).

Abdul Majid has a remarkable literary career. He is wonderfully gifted. He is the author of

1. Filsafa-i-Jazbat.
2. Filsafa-i-Ijtama.
3. Tarikh Ikhlaq Europe.
4. Makalmat Berkeley.
5. Piam Aman (Message of Peace).
6. Baharul Muhabbat, a masnavi of Mushaffi.
7. Zood Pashema (a Drama).
8. Psychology of Leadership (in English).
9. Tasarruf-i-Islam.
10. Filsafiana Mazamin, a collection of 6 articles published by Alnazir Press.

Abdul Majid has studied philosophy deeply and is an adept in writing about it in Urdu lucidly and in an interesting manner. His translations of English works are clear, idiomatic and learned. He has edited the unpublished masnavi of Mushaffi critically and the introduction is all that could be desired. He is a versatile genius and his literary drama Zood Pashema though unsuitable for stage provides good reading. Abdul Majid is also a poet of distinction but his output is small. He writes mostly in sufistic vein. He is a copious writer to magazines Urdu and English. He is a frequent contributor to the *Muarif*, *Alnazir*, *Urdu*, *Hindustan Review*, *Modern Review* and wrote to the defunct *Adib* of Allahabad. His articles are always replete with learning and are distinguished for their fairness, original thinking and scholarship. He has critical acumen of a high order. He is now engaged in editing the works of Maulana Rum. He is an ornament of Modern Urdu literature and has a brilliant future before him.

Daya Narain Nigam, born 1884 A. D.

Munshi Daya Narain Nigam is an outstanding personality in the world of Urdu Journalism. He was born in 1884 in Cawnpore in a respectable Kayastha family. His grandfather was Munshi Sheo Sahai a pleader of repute and a Vice-Chairman of the District Board. In 1899 Daya Narayan entered the Christ Church College in Cawnpore and graduated in 1903. In 1903 he became the Editor of the famous *Zamana* which he now owns. In 1912 he also started the *Azad* which after running for some time as a daily is now a weekly. In 1915 he accepted a honorary magistracy.

Daya Narain is a centre of many activities—social, political, literary, educational and journalistic. He belongs to the advanced school of thinkers in matters of social reform. His politics could best be termed as Responsive co-operation. His literary

and educational interests are deep and abiding. He is pre-eminently a journalist and is a beacon light to the younger generation of Urdu writers. He dedicated his whole life to the *Zamana* which he conducted and is conducting so ably and with such distinction for over 20 years. The *Zamana* is the premier Urdu monthly of the provinces and takes its place amongst the very few elect of real worth. It is the oldest surviving magazine, brings Hindi and Urdu writers on one common platform, contains criticism of a high order, publishes the views on social and political questions of distinguished literary publicists noted for the sobriety of their judgment. As a critic Daya Narayan is impartial and sound but his output is very small. He is a keen and enthusiastic supporter of the Hindustani Academy.

Lala Sri Ram, born 1875 A. D.

Lala Sri Ram of Delhi comes of a distinguished family which traces its descent according to him from Raja Todar Mal. His ancestors held high posts at the time of Mughal Emperors. His father was the celebrated Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Madan Gopal, M.A., who was a brilliant figure at Lahore and Delhi. His uncle was Rai Bahadur Master Pearey Lal Ashob, a contemporary and friend of Hali and Azad and a veteran educationist of the Punjab. Lala Sri Ram was born at Delhi in 1875 A.D. and received his early education there. At the age of twelve he went with his father to Lahore. In 1895 he graduated. In 1898 he passed his M.A. and Munsiffship examination and entered Government service and served at Lahore, Amritsar, Delhi, Jullandar and Rohtak. In 1902 he had an attack of asthma which became chronic. In 1907 he resigned the post and betook himself to his literary pursuits and to the management of his own considerable estate. He is a brilliant conversationalist and a charming man. His family is famous for its learning, public benefaction, hospitality and wealth.

Khum Khana-i-Jaweed.

Lala Sri Râm is the author of the famous but incomplete *Khum Khana-i-Jaweed*. His monumental history of Urdu poets and a select anthology of their works, of which four volumes have been published and four remain to be so, shows great patience, labour, research and scholarship. The story of its origin is related in the introduction of the first volume which was published in 1906. The second volume was published in 1910, the third in 1915 and the fourth in 1926. The *Khum Khana-i-Jaweed* is a veritable mine of information and is the most comprehensive survey of Urdu poetry. It has rescued from oblivion and obscurity many deserving poets. It must be conceded that many undeserving poets are also included but be it said in justice that they have received scant attention. His overmastering

sympathy sometimes betrays him into opinions which may not be thought critical and just. His taste is unerring in making selections of their poems. He has written the *Khum Khana* in a chaste, simple, graceful and charming style and it is remarkable both for its manner and matter. If all the volumes are published they would constitute the encyclopedia of Urdu poetry. The *Khum Khana* has been the life work of Lala Sri Ram and is one of the most useful and remarkable publications of the age. All historians of Urdu literature must recognise the debt which they owe to Lala Sri Ram and none is more conscious of it than the author. It is a herculian task but for which Sri Ram is fully fitted. This is indeed his *magnum opus*. It was widely appreciated as is shown by the flattering reviews appended at the end of the volumes.

Lala Sri Ram also published *Dewan-i-Anwar* in 1898 and *Mahtab Dagh* and *Zamima Yadgar-i-Dagh* in 1906.

Lala Sri Ram occupies a very lofty position in the modern Urdu literature. He is a great benefactor of Urdu who has immortalized the old Urdu poets, heartened the modern ones and inspired the younger ones by giving them wide publicity. He has a fine collection of rare Urdu manuscripts and old paintings. His is the life of lettered leisure.

It is impossible to notice adequately or even to name all the modern writers. Some of them will only be mentioned casually and incidentally. The list is wholly incomplete and inadequate. The modern writers of prose and poetry including those mentioned here will be fully dealt with in subsequent volumes.

Critics.

Bishan Narayan Dar was a keen student of Urdu and a poet of marked ability. He frequently wrote in Urdu and English on Urdu literature and was a critic of discernment. His articles on Sarshar and review of the New School of Urdu Literature by Abdul Qadir are informing and interesting. Mirza Jaafar Ali Khan Asar is a great modern Urdu poet and a critic of considerable ability. His articles on Mir and Sauda, to which I am indebted in my treatment of Mir, and his other critiques, are of much value. He writes in chaste and vigorous style. His language is clear, expressive and idiomatic. Ahsan Marahrwi, like Bishan Narayan Dar, Jaafar Ali Khan Asar and Hamid-ullah Afsar have been adequately noticed in my forthcoming volume and he is only casually noticed here. Ahsan, as a critic, ranks high. He has been editing the Dewan of Wali and is also the author of *Urdu Lashkar* which aims in recording the progress of Urdu poetry stage by stage in poetry. He is independent in thought and his language is direct but is often mordant and is occasionally marred by personal reflections and attacks which could well be avoided. Hamid-ullah Khan Afsar, Rashid Ahmad Siddique, Masaud Husain Rizvi and Jalil Ahmad Qidwai

are rising writers of cleverness and critics of great parts. Professor Nami, Professor Zamin Ali and the lecturer in Urdu in the Allahabad University are highly read in Urdu and their former's studies in Urdu literature are deep and scholarly. Hasrat Mohani is one of the pillars of Urdu poetry and criticism. His critiques though short are original, independent and illumining. They are very valuable. Daya Narayan, Abdul Qadir, and Abdul Haq and Zutshi have been noticed at some length already. There are other eminent critics who have been overlooked here for want of space but shall be noticed along with others in another volume.

Journalists.

Only a mere mention of a few of the journalists can be made here. Some of the journalists are critics and have been noticed under that head. Zafarul Mulk, Mian Bashir Ahmad, Tajwar amongst others are notable personalities. The names of some of the editors of the Urdu dailies are given in a short sketchy volume entitled *Akhbar Nawison ki Halat*—an account of journalists—by Mohammaduddin Fauq, Editor *Kashmiri Magazine*, and need not be recapitulated here.

Other writers.

The most eminent names are those of Khan Bahadur Sultan Ahmad, a most prolific writer on a variety of subjects in a clear but rather pedestrian style; Sultan Haidar, Josh, a very clever writer with an individuality of his own and a frequent contributor to the *Alnazir*; Sajjad Haidar, a writer of imaginative prose, has a graceful and charming style full of poignancy and force. He used to write under the pen-name of Yaldarm and is a keen student of Turkish. His articles have been published under the title of *Khayalistan*. He has translated a Turkish novel and a Turkish play entitled *Khwārizm Shah* into Urdu; Maulana Zafar Ali Khan is one of the greatest writers and a benefactor of Urdu. Many of his books and translations are published by the Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu of Hyderabad. His style for political subjects is remarkable; Hashimi Faridabadi is another great name belonging to the literary coterie of the Deccan with a creditable record of achievement; Mahdi Hasan is a word painter and a stylist in the true sense of the word. His style is delicate, charming and graceful. His writings are collected under the title of Ifadat Fahdi. Death cut short his career which was of great promise and his writings make an original contribution to the stock of Urdu literature.

Two new phases in the development of modern Urdu prose.

It is impossible to make a comprehensive survey of modern writers or tendencies that rule the present day prose. All that can be attempted here, is to notice very briefly two new important phases in the development of Urdu prose.

The first is the marked tendency and a conscious attempt to use long Arabic and Persian words inordinately. At first the idea was to heighten effect and give variety to the jejune and bald composition. It was a reaction from the steady and sedate prose of Sir Syed and his followers. It also enabled the writer to distinguish his writings by a display of his scholarship. This tendency definitely took its start with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad when he launched his famous paper the *Al-Hilal*. Abul Kalam, whose domain was religion and politics, however, is a clever craftsman and his prose, to which an eloquent testimony is paid by such a critic as Hasrat Mohani in one of his verses, does not suffer from the defects which characterise the writings of. his immature followers, admirers and imitators in whose hands the prose has degenerated into long strings of Persianised constructions and foreign indigestible words. This tendency further received strength from the writings of some men whose idea was to import and make current all the phraseology pertaining to the domain of theology, ritual and philosophy of Islam and Arabic words found in the Quran and Mohammadan religion. The object was to revive religious feelings in the devout. As a counter-blast some began to draw largely from abstruse Sanskrit and Hindi words. Such laudable efforts of the well-wishers of Urdu are fortunately limited to a small junto. Many lovers of true Urdu have raised a voice of protest against this pernicious tendency and have deprecated the use of "grandiloquent words and sesquipedalian phraseology.

Tendency to use largely, long, obscure and archaic Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit words and constructions.

Connected with this phase of interlarding Urdu with long, bizarre, archaic and obscure Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit locutions and constructions is the tendency to write what is termed "imaginative prose." Sometimes such a piece of prose is called Tagorean in style because it is supposed to be written in the manner of Tagore in *Gitanjali* and his other similar works. Such writings, however, are pseudo-imitations of Tagore and English writers of poetic prose with none of the beauties and graces that mark such compositions. They are neither informed with high mysticism nor quickened with the spirit of lofty imagination. Such writings with few notable exceptions of merit, are in the main extremely crude with little or no literary grace and are in the nature of rhapsodies often extravagant, unbridled, uncritical and occasionally silly. There is no golden thread of sense running through these beads which writers in their conceit suppose them to be pearls of rare value. Sometimes such compositions verge on the indecorous and the indecent. Such a kind of prose originated in a spirit of adventure. It was the opening

"Imaginative and Tagorean Prose."

of a new vista and the exploration of a new domain. It gave variety and breadth to the subjects of prose and to give elevation and colour to the style. It enabled the new enthusiasts to become 'stylists' and to air their 'poetic conceits' and quirks without the trammels and travail of verse. This was achieved in the matter of style by using long, archaic, obscure Persian and Arabic words and construction, by coining new words and constructions, by peculiar grammatical arrangements and other artifices; in the matter of subjects mythologies eastern and western notably Grecian and Roman were explored. Objects of nature were addressed with a frenzy of emotion, a haze of imagination was cast and a display of exuberant emotion was made. Sometimes such displays and juggling exhibitions are ludicrous. Within limits and in the hands of a real master such compositions may become a feast of colour, beauty and music but in the hands of callow practitioners they are beautiful nonsense and extravagant verbiage "full of sound and fury signifying nothing."

Old Urdu Journalism.

In 1836 A. D. the Press was made free. In 1838 A. D. Baqar Hussain, the father of Azad, started the *Urdu Akhbar* from Delhi. It was not exactly a purveyor of news but was literary in character. It contained the ghazals of Zauq, Ghalib, Momin and other poets composed in the same metre and rhyme. It also gave space for the discussion of the idioms and language. The chronograms commemorating the death of Zauq and controversy regarding the poetry of Shahidi were also published. It was patronised by the Government. In 1850 Munshi Harsukh Rai, a Bhatnagar Kayesth, started the *Koh-i-Noor*, Lahore. It enjoyed considerable popularity in British and Indian India. The Maharajas of Kashmir and Patiala held the paper and the proprietor in esteem. It commenced its career as a weekly and became bi-weekly and tri-weekly. It declined and was eclipsed by other young contemporaries whose editors had received inspiration and training in the office of *Koh-i-Noor*. Munshi Newal Kishore was also employed on the staff of this once famous paper. *Shula-i-Tur* and *Matla-i-Noor* were issued from Cawnpore. *Punjabi Akhbar* and *Anjuman-i-Akhbar* made their appearance from Lahore, *Ashraf-ul-Akhbar* from Delhi, *Victoria Paper* from Sialkot, *Qasim-ul-Akhbar* from Bangalore, *Kashaf-ul-Akhbar* from Bombay, *Karnama* from Lucknow. *Jarida-i-Rozgar* from Madras had a short and uneventful career. The next newspaper of considerable importance is the *Oudh Akhbar* which continues to flourish and is one of the important dailies of the United Provinces. It was started by Munshi Newal Kishore in 1859 A. D. and catered to the public by publishing news which were translations from the telegrams and cablegrams of English

papers. It had no settled policy in matters of politics, but it did not favour political agitation. It commenced as a weekly and afterwards became a daily. The *Oudh Akhbar* was fully equipped and had a good staff. *Shamsul Akhbar* from Madras was a contemporary of the *Oudh Akhbar* and catered mostly for Mohammadans. It was not a progressive paper and after a fitful career dwindled into insignificance.

The next paper of any importance is the *Akhbar-i-Am* of Lahore which was started by Pandit Makund Ram, a servant of the *Koh-i-Noor* and sponsored by a retired Government official. It was purely a newspaper and was exceedingly cheap. For a time it enjoyed the patronage of the Government and was subscribed for every school. The favour was, however, withdrawn. It became very popular and from a weekly paper became a bi-weekly and then tri-weekly. Its language was, however, not literary. It, however, deserves credit for popularising the newspaper and creating a real taste for it in the public.

The *Oudh Punch* came into existence in 1877 in Lucknow. It was a humorous weekly and was most successful in the heyday of its youth. It found many imitators in various parts of India. Its principal features were that it wrote with freedom, that it supplied the long-felt want of humour, that it was written in excellent, polished and literary Urdu and fourthly that it had tolerance for all sects and religions. Munshi Sajjad Hussain, the talented editor, was supported by able coadjutors.

The *Hindustani* was started from Lucknow in 1883 A. D. It was the first Urdu paper to take up seriously the political and burning questions of the day. It maintained a high level and seldom indulged in petty squabbles. It commenced as a weekly then became a bi-weekly and then tri-weekly and then again became a weekly. The language was, however, not of a high order due probably to haste in translation. It found an imitator in *Rafiq-i-Hind* from Lahore.

Sir Syed's *Institute Gazette* and *Tahzeeb-ul-Ikhlaq* from Aligarh have already been mentioned.

In 1887 the *Paisa Akhbar* came into being. Its editor and proprietor was Mahbub Alam. It furthered the cause of Urdu Journalism. Its low subscription and its superior merits helped it in its circulation. It derived profit from advertisements which began to appear in large numbers.

Literary modern Urdu magazines.

The *Dilgudaz* of Sharar is the oldest surviving Urdu monthly and still holds its own. The *Zamana* of Daya Narayan Nigam of Cawnpore has already been noticed and is one of the best edited magazines. The admirable *Adib* of Allahabad found an early grave. The *Alnazir* under the

able and talented editorship of Zafarul Mulk is a magazine of considerable merit and independence. The *Hazar Dastan* of Lahore is mainly devoted to stories and novels. The *Humayun* of Lahore and the *Shabab-i-Urdu* are creditable publications. The *Nigar* of Bhopal bears the impress of the personality of Niyaz Fatehpuri and is literary in character. The *Muarif* of Azamgarh is a magazine of distinct merit. The *Urdu* of Aurangabad is one of the best magazines of India and is wholly literary in character. Some of its articles are of first rate importance. The *Suhail* of Aligarh though newly born has noble aims and high aspirations and if it could keep up its level would soon be in acquisition to Urdu literature. The *Urdu-i-Mualla* of Hasrat Mohani was valuable but has sunk into insignificance. The *Muraqqa* and *Khayaban* from Lucknow, *Akbar* from Allahabad and other newly sprouted magazines are too young to be noticed. *Makhzan* has rendered considerable service to the cause of Urdu literature. I hope to do justice to modern writers and journalists in my next book. It would not be possible to name even some of the old defunct Urdu magazines but the names of the *Deccan Review*, *Hasan*, *Alasar*, are notable.

CHAPTER XVII

URDU PROSE PART III.

The Rise of Urdu Novel—The age of Sarshar and Sharar.

Old stories in Urdu borrowed from Persian and Sanskrit through Persian.

'The faculty for telling stories is the oldest artistic faculty in the world and the deepest implanted in the heart of man.' The earliest stories in Urdu are either translations from Persian works and Sanskrit works through Persian or expanded versions of the same. The stories are of extraordinary diversities, chivalrous, mythological, moral and scandalous though the treatment they receive is conventional and stereotyped. The incidents and adventures woven in the body of the narrative are monotonously alike. The marvellous is everywhere present, terrestrials and celestials intermingle freely. Sorcery, necromancy and witchcraft are the chief stock-in-trade. The stories are simple and objective and take no account of character. There is no subjective interest, no plot-architecture. They deal mainly with the adventures of lovers, the magic of enchanters and wizards, the fights of princes with sorcerers and the sudden metamorphosis of men into animals. They seldom touch episodes of contemporary life.

Main cycles of legends.

The main cycles of legends are:—

1. Arabian Nights.
2. *Dastan-i-Amir Hamza Sahib Qiran.*
3. *Bostan-i-Khayal* and *Tilism-i-Hoshruba.*
4. Tales of *Hatim Tai*, *Bagh-o-Bahar.*
5. Indian legends such as *Baital Pachchisi*, *Singhasan Battisi*, *Gul Bakavali*, *Tota Kahani*, *Kalelah-o-Damna.*

Munshi Newal Kishore and his Press.

All these romances and stories were published by the Newal Kishore Press, whose founder the famous Munshi Newal Kishore, C. I. E., exercised considerable influence on the destiny of Urdu and is one of the greatest benefactors of its literature. He enriched it by publishing old and rare classics, by having Urdu translations made of the famous and popular works in Persian and by having new books written to suit public taste and by providing text-books for schools. He was born in 1836 A.D. at Bastoi, District Aligarh. His grandfather Munshi Balmakund was government treasurer at Agra, and his father Munshi Jamna

Dass carried on the same business. Munshi Newal Kishore was a self-made man and showed early signs of business capacity. He had a predilection for newspapers and he worked in the *Koh-i-Noor* Newspaper of Lahore under Munshi Harsukh Rai where he received training and useful experience. After the Mutiny he gave up the service, came to Lucknow and established his own press in 1858 under the patronage of Sir Robert Montgomery and Colonel Abbott. Success attended his endeavours and very soon he succeeded in building up a prosperous and lucrative business. Whatever he touched turned gold and by his wonderful capacity his business attained great magnitude and the press came to be known as one of the biggest in India and the East. He spent large sums of money in purchasing old and rare books and succeeded in rescuing from the limbo of oblivion many valuable and choice works. He published and printed books in various languages such as Arabic, Sanskrit, Persian, Urdu, Hindi at great expense and the various editions of the Quran helped the regeneration of the Mohammadans not a little. He started the famous Urdu daily the *Oudh Akhbar* in 1859 A. D. At his death (1895 A. D.) he left property and business worth over a crore. His efforts in the cause of literature were seconded by his able son Rai Bahadur Munshi Prag Narain (1872—1916) and his worthy grandson Munshi Bishan Narain (born 1898) and the Newal Kishore Press still holds its own and successfully competes with his mushroom rivals.

Amir Hamza Sahab Qiran ka Qissa.

Some of the romances have been dealt with above. The romance of Amir Hamza Sahab Qiran is most voluminous and is a product of the fertile brain of Abul Faiz Faizi, the famous *literateur* in the time of Akbar for whose delectation and diversion it was composed in Persian. It comprises eight series and each series runs into many volumes of many hundred pages, the total number of volumes being seventeen with about 17,000 pages of large size. The most famous series are the series number one called *Nowsherwan Namah* in two volumes and series number five called *Tilism-i-Hoshruba* in seven volumes, the last series being the most popular. The translation of the first four volumes of *Tilism-i-Hoshruba* was made by Mir Mohammad Hussain Jah and of the last three by Ahmad Hussain Qamar. A metrical translation was made by Tota Ram Shayan. Sheikh Tasadduq Hussain also made a translation of a series at the instance of Munshi Newal Kishore. The romance contains an imaginary account of Amir Hamza, son of Abdul Muttalib, the uncle of Mohammad and is made up of various episodes which give rise to various other episodes.

Another cycle of legend is *Bostan-i-Khayal* in seven bulky volumes. It was written by Mir Taqi, poetically surnamed Khayal, a resident of Gujerat, when he came to Delhi. The story was started for the delectation of his mistress in a spirit of emulation, to outvie the *Dastan-i-Amir Hamza* which reigned in popularity. It received considerable impetus from the Emperor Mohammad Shah Rangiley Pia who liked it immensely and commanded the author to finish it. It comprises four thousand pages, and was variously translated in Urdu, the most famous translation being that of Khwaja Badruddin *alias* Khwaja Aman Dehlvi who translated the last five volumes and Mirza Mohammad Askari *alias* Chhottey Agha of Lucknow who translated the first two volumes and revised the whole series.

Bostan-i-Khayal.

There is no interpretation of human heart, no sustained evolution of character, no thread of emotional narrative and no plot. They are adventures of doughty men fighting with giants, sorcerers, and witches, sometimes enmeshed in the web of their magic always ultimately emerging triumphant with their lady-loves rescued from the clutches of their captors. The incidents sprinkled in the story read all alike. There is no verisimilitude, no adherence to the normal condition of experience. Most of these legendary stories and romances were resuscitated in the Fort William College of Calcutta under the inspiring influence of Doctor John Gilchrist and in the Newal Kishore Press.

The characteristic of the old stories.

Rajjab Ali Beg Sarur of Lucknow contributed something to the growth of the novel by fostering a taste and catering for it. He wrote his famous *Fisana-i-Ajaib* and many other romances and short stories. The language was, however, extremely artificial and the rhyme smothered sense and retarded action. The romances were of the usual type and the language was involved and cumbersome.

Rajjab Ali Beg Sarur.

In a limited way Nazir Ahmad approached to the modern form of novel by his various stories although they do not conform to all the modern canons. They are highly didactic through and through. They are vehicles for instruction in social and educational subjects and exhortations for religious doctrines. *Rua-i-Sadiqa*, *Tobat-ul-Nasuh*, *Mirat-ul-Urus*, and *Binat-un-Naash*, and *Fisana-i-Mubtla* are clearly illustrative of some moral in view which is pressed too often and too closely. Nazir Ahmad, however, achieved a great success in discarding the marvellous and the supernatural and attempting a delineation of contemporary manners and life and weaving a systematic plot. The highly

Nazir Ahmad.

interesting and lifelike pictures of the manners, habits and customs, bear witnesses to his acute power of observation. He has a command over language which is extremely perspicuous though occasionally ponderous with a quaint sense of humour. He is a master of narrative though by his digressions and desultory ramblings he occasionally mars the proportion of the story. His characters are interesting, though always tending to point a moral.

The Oudh Punch established 1877 A. D. Its numerous services.

The establishment of the *Oudh Punch* at Lucknow by Sajjad Haider in 1877 A. D. had a great effect on Urdu literature and Indian journalism. It contributed to the development of prose and brought into play humour and wit which were appreciated far and wide. It contained drama in embryo, freed Urdu from artificiality and conventionality, helped the cause of 'naturalness' and spontaneity, ministered to the growth and popularity of the novel and purified the Urdu language. In journalism, it was one of the first newspapers to have a settled policy. It was not only a purveyor of news but expounded views, safeguarded the rights of the subject nation and admonished the Indian Princes. It was, however, a curious mixture of progressive and retrogressive elements. It advocated the creed of the newly born Congress, supported Hindu-Muslim Unity, raised its voice against the whittling down of the Ilbert Bill and the passing of the Income-Tax Act, but was extremely conservative in social matters. It poured its vials of ridicule on the devoted head of Sir Syed who was called '*Pir Naturia.*' His religion was dubbed '*Naturia*' as opposed to orthodoxy in Mohammadanism. It opposed female education, western learning, and the abolition and relaxation of the Purdah.

Its numerous contributors.

The contributors to the *Oudh Punch* were some of the best writers of Urdu. Sajjad Hussain, Mirza Machchu Beg Sitam Zarif, Pandit Tirbhuan Nath Sapru Hijr, Nawab Syed Mohammad Azad, Pandit Jwala Prasad Barq, Ahmad Ali Shauq, Ahmad Ali Kasmandi and Akbar Hussain Akbar, Allahabad. Sajjad Hussain and Barq are pre-eminent as novelists.

Its humour.

It was mainly a humorous paper as its name denotes. The humour was however of a boisterous kind. It was not subtle, delicate, refined and natural as that of Ghalib. Sarcasm and ridicule often of a coarse kind are the principal weapons used. It aimed its shafts at personalities and rushed into controversy with the greatest glee and zeal. It was an open arena for fight and supplied fun and merriment to people by its controversies about *Fisana-i-Azad*, Hali, Dagh and *Gulzar-i-Nasim.* Sometimes it transgressed

the bounds of decorum and propriety. There was no smile but a full-blooded laugh which was often sardonic and malevolent.

Its service to the growth of the novel.

The short pictures of Lucknow life sometimes skilfully finished occasionally crudely drawn are very interesting and have a direct bearing on the growth of the novel. Moharram, Chahellum, Id, Shab-i-barat, Holi, Dewali, Basant, Aish Bagh fairs, festive boards and banquets, lit up with wine and laughter of the dancing girls, poetical contests, law courts, bird fights, electioneering campaigns were all delineated in a graphic and humorous manner.

Its service to Urdu prose.

The writings in the *Oudh Punch* are contemporaneous with the *Fisana-i-Azad* of Ratan Nath Sarshar, the founder of the modern Urdu novel. The writers of the *Oudh Punch* did immense service to strengthen modern prose and to demonstrate its capacity for all purposes. Some of these writers deserve to be noticed.

Sajjad Hussain, 1856 A. D.—1915 A. D.

Sajjad Hussain was the son of Munshi Mansur Ali, Deputy Collector, who went to Hyderabad as a Civil Judge after his retirement from the British service. He was born in 1856 A. D. at Kakori. In 1873 A. D. he passed the Entrance Examination and joined Canning College at Lucknow. He left his studies and after a short rambling and a temporary job as a Munshi in the army, he started in 1877 A. D. his paper, the *Oudh Punch.* and by his charming and intensely attractive personality gathered a devoted band of writers. Ratan Nath Sarshar also wrote for a couple of years but on being appointed as editor of the *Oudh Akhbar* he severed his connection. Having been crippled by two attacks of paralysis in 1901 A. D. and 1904 A. D. he died in 1915 A. D., the *Oudh Punch* having been closed in 1912 A. D. Sajjad Hussain was the originator of a humorous paper in Urdu and served his country and language through it. He was absolutely devoid of sectarian or religious prejudices and allowed religion no sway in literature. He had a style of his own. His writings combine knowledge with witticisms and pleasantries. His style is graphic and lucid. His open letters to the various Rulers of Indian States in India are frank in note and convey advice in his characteristic style. He is the author of many novels, specially *Haji Baghlol*, *Tarahdar Londi*, *Piyari Dunia*, *Ahmaquzzin*, *Dhoka*, *Mithi Chhuri*, *Kaya Palat*, and *Nashtar*, which are very popular. The novels are written in an attractive manner and are humorous and witty. The language is sweet and flowing and the idioms and metaphors are not laid too thick.

Mirza Machhu Beg, 1835–1894 A. D.

Mirza Mohammad Murtiza *alias* Mirza Machchu Beg, poetically surnamed Ashiq, son of Mirza Asghar Ali Beg, belonged to a very respectable family which settled down at Lucknow. In the beginning he paid more attention to physical exercises and distinguished himself in the use of arms, under the guidance of his maternal grandfather. After the Mutiny, however, he took to studies and also dabbled in poetry. After a time he gained considerable proficiency and became the pupil of Nasim of Delhi and made a name for himself. As a writer of prose he was distinguished for the purity of his language and witticisms. He wrote continuously till his death to the *Oudh Punch* under the *sobriquet* of Sitam Zarif for a period of thirty years. The articles are noted for their readability, humour, literary quality and excellence of idiom of which he was undoubtedly the master. Some of his published works in prose and poetry are: *Gulzar-i-Nijat*; *Milad-i-Sharif* (poem); *Aftab-i-Qiamat*; *Bahar-i-Hind*, a lexicon of Urdu idioms; Masnavi *Nairang-i-Khayal*. Some of his articles in the *Oudh Punch* were compiled and published under the title of *Chashma-i-Basirat*. His bulky Urdu diwan is with his son Mirza Mohammad Siddiq poetically surnamed Sadiq. Munshi Balmakund Gupta, Editor, *Bharat Mitr*, Calcutta, was one of his pupils. He was extremely humorous and had a wide circle of friends. He refused to accept service at Bhopal or in the Newal Kishore Press as the idea of restraint was repugnant to him. He even joined the Indian National Congress as a delegate and participated in the deliberations. At Allahabad he delivered his lecture in humorous verse which was published under the title of *Aftab-i-Qiamat*. The outstanding qualities of Machchu Beg's writings are the extreme purity of language and humour of a fine quality.

Tirbhuan Nath Sapru Hijr.

Tirbhuan Nath Sapru poetically entitled *Hijr* was a Kashmiri Pandit, son of Bishambar Nath Sapru. He was born in 1853 A. D. and joined Canning College but gave up his studies for journalism. He practised as a pleader at Lucknow and enjoyed considerable popularity for his gentleness, sociability and character.

Nawab Syed Mohammad Azad, born 1846 A. D.

Nawab Syed Mohammad Azad, I. S. O., was born in 1846 A. D. of a noble and wealthy Mohammadan family of Eastern Bengal at Dacca. He received his early training at the hands of Agha Ahmad Ali Isphahani who carried on a vigorous controversy with Ghalib about the Persian lexicon, *Burhan-i-Qata*. He studied English privately and attained to a high proficiency

in that language. He began life as a Sub-Registrar and finally became Inspector-General of Registration. He was nominated twice to a seat in the Bengal Council and was decorated with the badge of Imperial Service Order. He retired in 1912 A. D. He at first wrote in Persian in a Persian journal called *Doorbin* but he gave it up for Urdu and contributed to the *Oudh Akhbar*, *Oudh Punch*, *Akmal Akhbar*, *Agra Akhbar* and others. In 1878 A. D. there appeared his *Nawabi Darbar* in the form of a novel which was highly appreciated as it lashed the foibles and follies of an indolent Nawab of the old type. He went to England and his letters are extremely readable. His 'New Dictionary' is highly amusing although it is written in rhyming language probably for fun.

Jwala Prasad Barq, 1863-1911 A. D.

Jwala Prasad Barq, another Kashmiri Brahman, was a gifted writer. Born in 1863 A. D. at Sitapur he passed his Entrance Examination at Kheri; in 1878 A. D. he joined the Canning College. He graduated in 1882 A. D., took his Law degree in 1883 A. D., and practised as a pleader till 1885 A. D. when he joined the British service as a Munsiff. He rose to the post of Acting District and Sessions Judge. In 1909 A. D. he was a member of Griffin's Committee. In 1911 A. D. he died of plague widely mourned. He devoured *Fisana-i-Azad* as it appeared in instalments and modelled his style on it. His masnavi on Spring was highly applauded by Sir Syed and is a very creditable performance. Barq was a great translator. He translated many stories from Bankim Chandra Chatterjea, the great Bengali novelist, the most famous being *Bengali Dulhan Pratap*, *Mar-i-Astin*, *Rohni* and *Mirnalani*. The language is extremely simple, idiomatic, and eloquent and the style is admirable. They are the best examples of Urdu novels. He also translated many Shakespeare's dramas but unfortunately many of them never saw the light of the day.

Ahmad Ali Shauq Qdwai.

Ahmad Ali Shauq, a pupil of Aseer, is one of the leading Ustads of the present day. As a ghazal writer he holds a very high position and commands considerable influence in literary circles. He is the author of a few dramas in prose and poetry the most notable being *Qasim-o-Zohra* and *Macpherson and Lucy*. Shauq has written many charming masnavis which are deservedly very popular. His '*Alam-i-Khayal*' written in charmingly sweet, simple, and sincere verses took the Urdu reading world by storm. It describes the thoughts of a bereaved wife on the tip toe of expectation of the arrival of her separated husband. The *Izafat* (a relic of Persianization) has sedulously been avoided. His diwan has been published which fittingly

ranks high. He lived at Rampur for a long time and is a great master of prosody and verse technique. He paid great attention to language even in his contributions to the *Oudh Punch*. His death left a gap in the ranks of prominent Urdu writers.

The *Oudh Punch* and the *Dilgudaz* of Sharar rendered the same service to the Urdu novel as the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* did for the English novel.

The modern Urdu novel, however, takes a real start with Pandit Ratan Nath Sarshar.

Ratan Nath Sarshar, died 1902 A. D.

Pandit Ratan Nath Dar, poetically surnamed Sarshar, with a most remarkable figure in the last decades of nineteenth century. He belonged to a respectable Kashmiri family and was born in Lucknow in 1846 or 1847. He was only four years of age when his father Pandit Baijnath died. His younger brother Pandit Bishambhar Nath was a deputy collector and his son is now employed in the Balrampur State. Sarshar's son Pandit Niranjan Nath Dar was employed in the treasury and died young. He learnt Arabic and Persian and English. He joined the Canning College but could take no degree. He entered service as a teacher in the Zilla School (District School) Kheri. From there he used to write for the *Marasla-i-Kashmiri* a periodical started for the regeneration of the Kashmiri Brahmins of Northern India, and the *Oudh Punch*. The articles are not remarkable and served only to train him up for his future work. Sarshar was an adept at translations and he used to send contributions to an organ of an Education Department which were highly appreciated for their literary quality and moral instruction. The Director of Public Instructions was impressed with his translations and Sarshar's merits were recognised. Sarshar also wrote for the *Miratul Hind* and *Rayazul Akhbar*. In 1878 he translated an English book under the title of *Shamsuzzuha* and the translation was admirably done as many scientific terms were appropriately rendered in excellent Urdu idiom. In 1878 he was appointed the editor of the *Oudh Akhbar* by its proprietor Munshi Newal Kishore. It is said that Dr. Griffith introduced him to Munshi Sahib, who was in search of a capable man to reply to the *Oudh Punch* which had begun to indulge in attacks on the *Oudh Akhbar*. He brought out his famous work the renowned *Fisana-i-Azad* as a feuilleton of the *Oudh Akhbar* and it lasted till December 1879. The *Fisana-i-Azad* appeared in a book form in 1880 and commanded huge sales. Sarshar became involved into controversy with Sajjad Hussain, the editor of the *Oudh Punch* and once his intimate friend. The *Oudh Panch* was flooded with jokes, ridicule, sarcasm and even

buffoonery at the expense of Sarshar. Numerous objections were taken against the *Fisana-i-Azad* but Sarshar replied vigorously. At last friends intervened and a reconciliation was effected. Sarshar figured in two other controversies one with Syed Muhammad Murtiza Bayan and Yazdani of Meerut, the editor of *Tuti-i-Hind* (who died in 1900 at the age of sixty) and the second with Hali of Panipat. As an editor of the *Oudh Akhbar* Sarshar used to write on political, social and educational subjects.

Sarshar also wrote *Sair Kuhsar*, *Jam Sarshar*, *Kamni* and *Khudai Foujdar* which is a translation of Don Quixote. About 1893 he started a serial called the *Khumkada-i-Sarshar* and his novels *Kadam Dham*, *Bichhdi Dulhan*, *Tufan-i-Betamizi*, *Pi Kahan* and *Hashsho* were published. They show the decline in his art. Before leaving for Hyderabad Sarshar was employed as a translator in the Allahabad High Court but he was removed as he could not conform to the discipline and rigid regularity of the office. About 1895 he left for Hyderabad. He describes his stay at Hyderabad in one of his letters which were published in March 1899 in *Kashmiri Darpan* and a part of which is quoted by Chakbast. "It is about four years ago that I came to Madras as a member of the Congress. My good fortune took me to Hyderabad. Both the Hindus and Mohammadans—the plebeians and patricians—welcomed me cordially. Maharaja *Sair Kuhsar* Prasad has appointed me on a salary of Rs. 200 to correct his poems and prose. He has given me robes of honour and whenever he is pleased at some verse he gives me a sovereign......The Nizam knows me from before. The first day when I presented the *Nazar* and also my books the Nizam did me the high honour of listening to a description of the court in my book *Sair Kuhsar*. He also heard a chapter of *Jam Sarshar*......I have sent a chronogram celebrating the birth of the Prince and the verse has been well received. I have been enrolled as a distinguished *Darbari* and efforts are being made for my *Mansab*. God willing my new novel *Gor-i-Ghariban* will be published in a fortnight's time." For some time Sarshar edited the *Dabda-i-Asafia*. His novel 'Chanchal' appeared in it in instalments but the serial was never finished. *Gor-i-Ghariban* is probably lost to the world and *Chanchal* is not of much importance. Towards the end of his life Sarshar drank heavily and this excess was the indirect cause of his premature death. He died in Hyderabad in 1902.

Sarshar was a facile poet. He was the pupil of Aseer. He wrote creditably. In 1894 he wrote a qasida for the Kashmiri Conference. He is the author of a masnavi entitled *Tuhfa-i-Sarshar* which was written to calm the storm raised out the

return of Pandit Bishan Narayan Dar from England. It was exceedingly popular and was written off-hand, and it succeeded in removing to a considerable extent the prejudices against foreign travel.

Ratan Nath was a Bohemian in the true sense of the word. He had a wonderful memory and was utterly devoid of prejudice and bigotry. He was an amusing conversationalist and a born *raconteur*. Drink cut short his career as it did of another genius the famous poet Durga Sahai Sarur. He was not only the founder of the Urdu novel modelled after the modern European novel but was a distinguished journalist, a clever man of letters, a master of Urdu, a brilliant humorist and an eminent stylist. Unfortunately his fame has suffered owing to prejudices and partly to his own indifference to reputation. The hurry and carelessness attendant on newspaper publications is responsible for most of crudities and tinsel in *Fisana-i-Azad*. His intemperate habits while acting as a spur to his genius led him into the quagmire of indolence, indifferences and inattention. He never revised a single page nor did he correct a single proof sheet. He wrote on the spur of the moment when prodded to do so with whatever material then available even a straw in place of a quill. The incoherence of plot, the incongruity of characters, the inconsistency in piecing out the various incidents can all be traced to this fatal habit of drink and sloth. Wine dissolved the spell of inaction and the proprietor of the newspaper used to lure him to work with a bottle of liquor. Apart from this inherent weakness Ratan Nath never sought any adventitious aid to bolster his fame. He never cared for the crutches of courtly support and always depended upon his own genius to gain recognition. It is true he repaired to Hyderabad to bask in the sunshine of the Nizam's patronage but he was a failure both on account of his intemperate habits and his inability to adapt himself to his new surroundings. Both tact and temper were wanting in him and he "the father of Urdu novel" died in a strange place "unwept, unhonoured and unsung."

His works. Ratan Nath is the author of many works the more important of them being :—

1. Fisana-i-Azad.
2. Sair-i-Kuhsar.
3. Jam-i-Sarshar.
4. Kamni.
5. Khudai Foujdar.
6. Karam Dhum.
7. Bichhdi Dulhan.
8. Hashsho.
9. Tufan-i-Betamizi.
10. Rangiley Siyar.
11. Shamsuzzuha.
12. A Urdu translation, of Wallace's Russia.
13. A translation of Lord Dufferin's letters from Higher Altitude.

Fisana-i-Azad.

In 1878 A. D. the first instalment of ***Fisana-i-Azad*** appeared in the columns of the *Oudh Akhbar* and it took the Urdu reading world by storm. It almost killed people with suspense, such was the interest excited by the story. "The plot of the story is very simple and by itself extremely uninteresting; but we read through more than 2,500 closely printed pages of it with eager and unabated interest because of the artistic embellishments with which the author clothes it—a style free and easy, fresh, illustrative, natural and vivid; delicate touches of humour, brilliant flashes of wit, racy jokes and telling repartees, inconceivable fooleries and drolleries and are inexhaustible fertility of laughter. Azad the hero of the story is a young man of fortune, a perfect man of the world, very handsome, very enlightened, knowing several languages, a soldier and a wit, a poet and a lover, a conversationalist falling in love with several women. He can adorn the highest society but is at the same time easily at home with a *Bhatyari* girl for purposes of his own and again you find him admitted into the harems. Accidentally he falls in love with a beautiful lady of fortune—Husn Ara, is smitten with her charms and in a moment is head over ears in love with her. He pays his court to her, after some time is accepted, obtains from her the promise of marriage on the condition of his proceeding to Turkey to join the Sultan's army and fight against the Russians. Azad obeys the command of his lady-love, fights the Russians, returns victorious and wins the glorious reward for which he has dared and suffered so much. This is the main story and it is as thin and insipid a story as has emanated from the brain of man. But read it as it is narrated by Ratan Nath Dar, a regular picture gallery as he has made of it, the variegated hues of art with which he has painted it, the irresistible witchery of words with which he has clothed it, the wealth of imagination which he has lavished upon it, the bustle and animation with which he has imparted to a hundred scenes and you perceive half-believing, half-doubting your senses, a rich and gorgeous vision rising up before you as Prospero waves his magic wand."

Merits of Fisana-i Azad.

Fisana-i-Azad is not to be read for symmetry of plot or sustained evolution of characters or gradual development of story. The story merely serves as a peg to hang a thousand and one incidents. It is best in its isolated pictures, in the incidental outbursts of wit and humour, in its amusing characters, in the flashes of sparkling *bon mots* and brilliant retorts. Like the novels of Dumas, the interest centres in conversational rather than descriptive portions of the story. Ratan Nath is a master of dialogues and he delineates the characters not with

a lengthy and tedious description of things but by characteristic and piquant conversations.

The realistic art of Sarshar's Fisana-i-Azad.

Sarshar is never conventional like Sarur. He never idealises toning up the bad features and brightening up the good ones. He is extremely realistic and describes Lucknow life in all its phases,—high and low, rich and poor; his characters never flit like shadows; they are human beings of flesh and blood living, breathing and palpitating with life. "If you go into his crowds,—noisy, rowdy, hustling, bustling crowds—you have to take care that you are not knocked down by the rush behind, that you do not lose your watch and that your pockets are not picked. He describes the Moharrum and Chahellum and the Aish Bagh faire and there you find yourself in a motley throng—quail-fighters, kite-flyers, opium-eaters, Nawabs with their oddly dressed, emaciated, pale-looking retainers, dancing-girls driving in phætons and landaus, exchanging amorous glances with some fantastically dressed old rake riding on an elephant; host of beggars running after every carriage some with blessings, some with curses on their lips; impecunious lovers and foppish loungers, ugly and pretty women of all ages, one crying for her missing child, another quarrelling with her paramour, a third flirting with Nawab Saheb's gallant boon-companion, the policeman, the thief, the octroi moharrir, the Railway Babu, the Thakur who has come from a neighbouring village to see the fair, the Lala who is pouring the wealth of his Persian knowledge into the lap of betel-seller, the anglicised graduate with a cigarette in his mouth, the new-fashioned Mohammadan with a Turkish fez on his head, the Bengalee whose soft, thin *dhoti* seems to unfurl the flag of defiance at every rush of the crowd. This is the motley crowd in which you are introduced, the din of a thousand voices is in your ears, and around you the seething and surging of a vast mass of living, moving, chattering, clamouring humanity, and the beauty of it is that each type is distinctly brought before you, in the manner in which he talks and acts."

Characteristics of Sarshar as a novelist.

The outstanding features of the *Fisana-i-Azad* and indeed of most of the novels of Ratan Nath are a faithful and vivid portrayal of life and manners of Lucknow society and his brilliant humour. Nowhere such graphic and realistic descriptions replete with minute details of the fast decaying life then found at Lucknow can be seen in the pages of any writer. He is a consummate master in faithfully picturing the life of the indolent Nawab, his pastimes and amusements, his boon-companions and dancing-girls. He was at home in the Mohammadan harems and the

life described with a wealth of detail astonishes his reader considering that he was a Hindu to whom the harems are *sacrosanct.* He has uplifted the curtain completely and we see Mohammadan and Hindu life in the Zenana clearly with no reservations. (He had a wonderful knowledge of the dialects peculiar to all the classes, the villager, the city folk, the ladies of the harem, their attendants and *mughlanis*, the inn-keeper and his wife *Bi Bhatyari*, the opium-eater, the *chandu*-smoker, the wine-bibber, the thief, the turbulent and awkward Thakur, the learned Lala. He had a great command over the language and equally great mastery over expression.)

Sarshar's humour.

His humour is full-blooded, healthy and unrestrained. It does not partake of the delicacy and refinement of the humour of Ghalib and is sometimes an outrage on decorum. But the spontaneous and the inexhaustible flow rushes him along and his intensely realistic pen lands him in places which he might well have avoided. None of his contemporaries excel him or even approach him in his fund of humour. Conversation is his *forte* and he is seen at his best in his sparkling retorts and quick fire of brilliant repartees. As a humorist Sarshar is pre-eminent.

Ratan Nath Sarshar, 'The child of the age'.

The rotten state of society lent wings to his genius and fire to his imagination. The last half of nineteenth century was an age of revolt. It witnessed the change brought about by Sir Syed Ahmad and Swami Dayanand. He was a child of his age although he did not feel the tendencies of his age in all seriousness. Says Bishan Narayan Dar : ' The levity, the spirit of irreverence and iconoclasm, the epicureanism and the discontent though of a passive sort, with the existing order, that mark his times, he fully shared ; and nobody need cast a doubt upon his utter sincerity when he saturates his work with them, and invests them with a thousand charms which his art can supply. But in this respect he renders no ineffective aid to the liberal movement which dissolved the bonds of traditional beliefs and time-honoured conventions. In the evolution of every society there comes a stage when ridicule is as effective as anathema against errors, when to make vice stand naked on the public stage is to make it feel ashamed. A good joke sometimes kills errors which no sermons can touch and a sneering laugh 'shoots folly as it flies.' Ratan Nath, when he comes into contact with the priest, the preacher, the moralist, the advocate of caste, the old aristocrat—the man who traces his descent to Mohammad or Tamarlane—and listens to their sermons, exhortations and protests, shows no disposition to argue with them or quarrel with them ; he simply jokes with them and

although the serious people are scandalised and offended thereby, yet the watching crowd laughs and by laughing allows itself to be half vanquished by the joker and thenceforward those who have laughed with the joker can never weep with the preacher of the old gospel. This is the way of Ratan Nath; he jokes, he laughs, he conquers. In this respect we may count him as one of the disintegrating forces in our society. He did not identify himself with any particular movement. His temper was not the temper of a prophet or a reformer, he was at bottom a jester and a trifler.'

Ratan Nath Sarshar, the artist.

Ratan Nath is a great artist in painting his characters. His pictures of rakes and libertines, indolent nawabs and intriguing abigails are clever. His characters however are mostly caricatures and not drawn exactly to real life. 'He was not a good portrait painter, but he was a consummate caricaturist. Within the narrow limits of his own sphere, he was a compound of Dickens and Thackeray. In high and low life he could seize upon the odd points of a man's character and draw out of them an inexhaustible fund of laughter. In looking at these characters you do not imagine whether they are possible; it is enough that they make you laugh.'

Khogi.

Ratan Nath would always be remembered for the creation of the ever-amusing Khogi, the companion of Azad. 'He is an unique character in the whole range of Urdu literature and is the most original and wonderful creation of humorous art.' 'Khogi the old fool, the faithful friend of Azad, the ridiculous prig, the impudent bully, the foppish idiot, the shameless rake, the swaggering rascal, a bundle of weakness physical as well as intellectual, a pigmy unconscious of his dwarfishness, always boasting of his past deeds of valour which are anything but real, exciting ridicule and laughter at his own expense wherever he goes and deeming the world somehow or other intentionally shutting its eye to his excellences.' His drolleries, his whimsicalities, his devotion to Azad, his brandishing of his short sword, his oaths, his gasconades to hide his natural cowardice all endear him to his readers. His terms of expressions and mannerisms have borne the hall-mark of public approbation and are current coin in Urdu.

Sarshar discarded the miraculous.

Another great merit of Ratan Nath as a novelist is that he discarded the supernatural and created interest in the ordinary life of human beings. Nazir Ahmad also disdained the use of the miraculous but his stories were highly didactic, meant only as a healthy reading for girls with a view to educate them, without any element of excitement and amusement. Ratan Nath was the first

to write a story of contemporary life to amuse which is the true and proper function of the modern novels.

Sarshar's defects explained.

It must be admitted that Ratan Nath's story lacks plot-architecture. The *Fisana-i-Azad* was never meant to be story with a definite plot, and his attempt to wind up the various incidents into a compact whole resulted in failure. He could not take up the various threads and weave out of them a consistent and intricate plot. This weakness is apparent in other novels also. It is mainly due to his carelessness and intemperate habits which disdained any sustained effort on his part. He seldom worked with the zeal and fervour of an artist and often resented the irksome yoke of his duties as an editor and writer of stories for a newspaper. Ratan Nath has done scant justice to his genius which he fritters away for want of discipline. To the same source may be traced the lack of unity of arrangement in incidents and want of logical order in his chapters. To the same cause may be attributed the want of consistency in his characters and anachronisms in the story. They undergo a hundred metamorphosis in the course of narrative. He writes for the moment and does not care for the sustained evolution of character. He has no patience with himself. His pen must move with the rapidity of a race horse. He writes in season and out of season, in moments of inspiration and in periods of dullness. When he does not soar he trails on the ground haltingly, limpingly. Ratan Nath is not a thinker and when he assumes that *role* he fails miserably and flounders in platitudes. The last volume of the *Fisana-i-Azad* and the closing chapters of *Hashsho* contain tedious lectures on female education, theosophy, temperance and various other subjects of similar nature. Ratan Nath misses his avocation when he preaches. He does not also show much emotional depth. There are no highly wrought and tender pictures of human sorrow. His pathos is not genuine. There is no real sorrow but only 'trappings and suits of woe' made up of trite quotations, mechanical sentences, conceits and affectations. Charges of indecency and obscenity have been levelled against Ratan Nath. It is true that in some places he has indulged in coarseness and vulgarity and sometimes has shocked morality but the realism of his art, his irrepressible humour and his general carelessness together with the picture of his society which he was holding up to ridicule must condone such lapses. He must be judged by the standard of the morality of his age. He could not have lashed folly and immorality if he had not exhibited it in all its nudity and revolting disgust. He rendered a distinct service to literature and to society and the flaws incidental to his art need be looked with a tolerant eye. He crowds his canvas with too many characters and he lays his incidents too thick marring symmetry and causing confusion.

Sarshar as a stylist.

As a master of Urdu prose and as a stylist Ratan Nath ranks very high. As a writer of bright crisp, very natural, idiomatic Urdu full of nerve and force he takes precedence over many writers of note. As a stylist he is second only to Azad and superior to almost all his contemporaries. He fashioned a style admirably adapted to the composition of the imaginative and artistic works. He is read more for his style than for his story. People have found fault with his language and have thrown doubts as to the correctness and purity of his idioms. Occasionally he errs as would do the best of the writers but most of these attacks are spiteful and based on unreasonable prejudice. In language he exercises no restraint and often interlards it with a superabundance of idioms and metaphors due to the exuberance of his ideas and command over words.

Sarshar and Sarur compared and contrasted.

Sarur as a painter of Lucknow is conventional while Sarshar is bold, natural and free. Sarur describes things. Sarshar describes living, breathing men. 'Sarur idealises his picture touching up the bright features and suppressing the darker ones. Sarshar gives an accurate picture with the good and bad points all brought out in clear relief.' 'With Sarur we seem to stand by the side of an artificial canal cut across a park in which only pure water is allowed to flow and on the banks of which roses bloom and orange-groves shed their perfume. Sarshar makes us stand by the side of a mighty river with the play of wind and wave about it and the murmur of wild forests on its bank but now and again offensive and unclean things are floating past us upon the surface of its stream. Sarur's picture is pleasing and graceful because he was satisfied with the life he describes; he loves it and sees nothing wrong in it. Sarshar is dissatisfied with the society he paints indeed in some respects he is quite disgusted with it; and he does not conceal his dissatisfaction and disgust in the picture of it which he paints. Hence we may say that while Sarur represents the conservative school and belongs to the past Sarshar represents the liberal movement in literature, the movement which marks the return of art from conventionality, to nature, and he therefore belongs to the present and the future.' Sarur's pictures are more compact, graceful and symmetrical. Ratan Nath scores in the repudiation of the supernatural which is an integral part of machinery in *Fisana-i-Ajaib.*

Sarshar as a poet and a journalist.

Sarshar has no great claims as a poet though he writes better than many who arrogate to themselves positions not warranted by their writings. The palmiest days of the *Oudh Akhbar* were the days of his editorship and he would have achieved a greater success as a journalist had he

combined more diligence and care with his natural gifts and facile pen.

Sarshar's position.

As a brilliant humorist, as a fashioner of modern Urdu novel, as a writer of chaste, idiomatic, bright and nervous Urdu, as a distinguished stylist, as an artist of great power, as a genins of great brilliance, Ratan Nath towers very high amongst his contemporaries and deservedly occupies ■ foremost place amongst the prose-writers of the present age.

Abdul Halim Sharar, 1860 A. D.

Another important figure who gave a definite lead to the development of Urdu novel is Abdul Halim Sharar. He created historical novel, paid more attention to his plots and characters and demonstrated the capacity of plain unvarnished prose for writing of novels. He tried to uplift the novel from the indecorous and the debased ransacking far and wide for materials with which he constructed his plots. He is not only an eminent and prolific writer of novels but also a historian, a dramatist, a man of letters, an essayist and one of the greatest and most adventurous and enterprising of journalists.

His life at Calcutta.

Sharar as he is popularly known was born at Lucknow in 1860 A. D. He belongs to a respectable and an ancient family of Shaikhs who settled in India at the time of the Tughlaks after migrating from Arabia to Iraq and thence to Herat. His father Hakim Tafuzzul Husain Khan was married to the daughter of Qamaruddin who was employed in the Courts of Amjad Ali Shah and Wajid Ali Shah and who after the deportation of Wajid Ali Shah, and annexation of Oudh, accompanied the exiled King's brother, mother and son to England who went to represent the case to the Queen and the Parliament. In 1862 Sharar's father left for Calcutta and joined Wajid Ali Shah at Mutia Burj. In 1867 A. D. he was recalled to Calcutta and placed under various masters at Mutia Burj which had attracted scholars from far and near. Sharar spent about ten years at Mutia Burj in the companionship of princes Mirza Mohammad Ali, Mirza Kambux and Mirza Mohammad Jalal. Thrown in such a society he acquired the purity of idiom and a certain amount of culture but became addicted to a life of pleasure and gaiety calculated to do him harm. In 1875 A. D. on the retirement of Qamaruddin he was appointed to the vacant post but the work did not interfere much with his studies.

His life at Lucknow. His studies.

In order to wean him from baneful atmosphere of his companionship his father secretly planned and had him removed to Lucknow and he left Calcutta in 1877. In 1878 A. D. he was married to his cousin but the marriage did not interrupt his studies. He read the *tradition* and

divinity and even secretly went to Delhi in 1879 A. D. to study the *Hadis* breaking his journey at Aligarh and seeing Sir Syed who created a profound impression on his mind. In poetry he consulted Nazm Taba Tabai of Lucknow now at Hyderabad.

His journalistic activities.

In 1880 he returned to Lucknow and looked for a job. He was introduced to Munshi Nawal Kishore, the founder of the famous Nawal Kishore Press, by Maulvi Mohammad Hai who being favourably impressed by him, appointed him as an assistant Editor of the *Oudh Akhbar* on a salary of Rupees thirty after a short period of probation. He was thus launched on the waters of journalism and soon learnt his craft under the guidance of Munshi Ahmad Ali Kasmandi, the able contributor to the *Oudh Punch.* Sharar wrote on all sorts of subjects, literary, speculative, philosophical and political. He acquired ease in writing and his apprenticeship stood him in great good in his profession as a journalist. His contributions commanded attention in the beginning of his career and his articles on 'soul' were commended by no less a personality than Sir Syed.

Sharar's journey to Hyderabad (Deccan). His historical novels.

In 1882 A. D. he started his first paper at Lucknow, a weekly called *Mahshar* in the name of his friend, Maulvi Abdul Basit, poetically surnamed Mahshar. It was gaining public favour by its attempt to imitate Addison in Urdu by writing interesting essays but it stopped after two years when Sharar undertook his first journey to Hyderabad in 1884 A. D. as a special correspondent of the *Oudh Akhbar*. He was favourably received by the men of light and culture and he was induced to accept the post of an Editor to the *Hazar Dastan* but he could only do so when he had severed his connection with the *Oudh Akhbar*. He returned to Lucknow to settle the account but in the interim the *Hazar Dastan* ceased publication and he stayed back. About this time Sharar published his first novel *Dilchasp* and his translation from English of the famous novel of Bankim Chandra, *Durgesh Nandini* which were highly welcomed. In 1886 A. D. Sharar was advised by Maulvi Bashir-ud-din to start a cheap monthly of a moderate size devoted to literature and history. In January 1887 came into existence the famous *Dilgudaz* which had a chequered career of many deaths and births. Originally the yearly subscription was only one rupee but in 1888 it was raised to rupees two and a portion of historical novel was given away as a supplement. Happening to read Scott's *Talisman* in a railway journey Sharar was annoyed at the way the Mohammadan religion and views were interpreted and he resolved to write a novel of the crusades in which he would glorify Mohammadan heroes and religion. The result was his *Malakul-Aziz* and

Virginia which was published in 1886 and is the first historical novel in Urdu according to the English pattern. Though not free from defects it was a remarkable performance and laid the foundation of historical novel and marked a beginning of series of such novels which delighted the Urdu reading public for a very long time. *Husan* and *Angelina* appeared in instalments in the *Dilgudaz* in 1889 A. D. and was reproduced in a book form. *Mansur Mohana* similarly appeared in 1890. *Hasan* and *Angelina* relates to Rome and Russia and *Mansur Mohana* to Sindh at the time of the invasion of Somnath by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. He wrote his first historical drama entitled *Shahid-i-Wafa*, dealing with the episodes of the decadent Islam in Spain. In 1890 A. D. Sharar started another weekly paper the *Muhazzab* which contained a biography of one of the scholars of ancient times. In 1888 A. D. he had written the first part of *Dilkash* a novel dealing with the state of the present society but it remained incomplete, as also his *Yusuf-o-Najma* which was doled out to the public in instalments, as a supplement to the *Dilgudaz*.

His second journey to Hyderabad and his literary and journalistic activities there.

In 1891 A. D. owing to financial embarrassment Sharar went to Hyderabad to better his fortune. The *Dilgudaz* was stopped. After a short stay he attracted the notice of Wiqarul-umra who selected him as a companion for his son who was being sent to England for his education. He went to Lucknow to set his affairs in order and returned early in the hope to sail. The voyage was however postponed and Sharar accepted a salary of Rs. 200 (Hyderabad currency). Sharar commenced to write his 'History of Sindh' which was given to the world as a supplement to the *Dilgudaz* and later on reproduced in a book form in two volumes. He devoted much patience and energy in its composition and it discloses a fair amount of scholarship and research. He was rewarded for his labours by Nawab Wiqarul-umra who was now the Prime Minister by a present of Rs. 5,000 from State Treasury. In 1893 A. D. Sharar asked one of his friends at Lucknow to restart the *Dilgudaz* and one of his historical novels appeared in instalments in it. He wrote an article on the 'Family of the Prophet' which gravely offended the religious susceptibilities of the Shias and evoked much criticism and anger.

His journey to England, 1893 A.D.

In the heat of this controversy Sharar was ordered to proceed to England in the middle of 1893 A. D. The *Dilgudaz* again ceased publication. His novels were greatly in demand, and even his unfinished novel *Dilkash*, *Yusuf-o-Najma* and *Zayad aur Halawa* were reprinted and were finished by various other writers. *Zayad aur Halawa* was however finished by Sharar in England and published in India under the title of *Flora Florinda*.

In England Sharar privately studied English and a little of French and returned to India in 1896 A. D. In 1898 A. D. the *Dilgudaz* was resuscitated and appeared from Hyderabad with a novel dealing with the pre-Islamic days of Arabia as a supplement. His genius now took a historical turn. He was again unfortunate to wound the religious feelings and instincts of the Shias in a more violent manner by writing an article on Sakina, daughter of Hussain, grandson of the Prophet. It caused widespread resentment and many articles and pamphlets were published in refutation.

His return to Hyderabad.

His return to Lucknow with frequent journeys to Hyderabad, Literary and journalistic occupations.

At the end of 1899 A. D. he went back to Lucknow with the permission of Wiqarul-umra. The office of the *Dilgudaz* also went with him and the periodical again started from Lucknow. He published the novel of *Firdaus Barin* which had been composed during his stay at Hyderabad. In 1900 A. D. the second volume of *Ayyam Arab*, dealing with the pre-Islamic days of Arabia was issued as a supplement. *Muqaddas Naznin*, another novel, was published. Sharar also translated Sir George Cox's *History of the Wars of Crusades* and an English novel under the title of *Daku ki Dulhan* and gave them out in instalments in the *Dilgudaz*. In the same year he again ventured into a new periodical called the *Purdah-i-Asmat* in the name of Syed Hasan Shah. It advocated the abolition of the *Purdah* and created quite a sensation in all Muslim circles, the stronghold of the *Purdah* in India. Before this Sharar had settled views against this obnoxious institution as found in all its rigour. Sharar had written many articles against it in a periodical at Hyderabad entitled *Muallim Niswan* and had published in the same magazine his novel called *Badrun-nisa ki Musibat* and his drama *Meva-i-Talkh* exposing the evils attendant on this custom. He incurred the odium of all the orthodox and conservative Mohammadans, a section of which had already been bitterly against him. In 1901 A. D. he again left Lucknow for Hyderabad at the desire of Nawab Wiqarul-umra, his patron, and consequently the *Dilgudaz* and the *Purdah-i-Asmat* ceased publication. After some time a revolution in the State politics compelled him to leave Hyderabad and retire to Lucknow where the *Dilgudaz* was again revived in 1904 A. D. A fifth magazine was started but the *Ittihad* which aimed at Hindu-Muslim unity and was an organ intended to promote and foster it died after a short life of a year and a half.

Novels were composed and served to the public as a supplement to the *Dilgudaz*. In 1905 *Shauqin Malka*, a novel relating to the second crusade was given out; in 1906 *Yusuf-o-Najma*. He made another venture in the domain of journalism and the *Alarfan* as the newspaper was called was mainly devoted to Sufism

and divinity but it had a short run and ceased publication owing to Sharar's journey to Hyderabad. It was about this time that Sharar started his series of the 'Heroes of Islam.' He published the lives of Junaid Bughdadi (1906) and Abu Bekr Shibli (1907). In 1906 *Tarikh Sindh* Part I was published in the *Dilgudaz.* In 1907 Sharar went to Hyderabad where he was called to work as an Assistant Director of Education. In 1908 the *Dilgudaz* was published from Hyderabad, and in the same year the novel of *Qais-o-Labna*, the *History of Sindh* Part II and the life of Aghai Saheb appeared in instalments in the *Dilgudaz.* In 1909 the *Dilgudaz* ceased publication as Sharar had to leave Hyderabad with his friends at the order of the Nizam. In that year, however, two novels saw the light of the day; they were *Agha-Sadiq ki Shadi* and *Mah-i-Falak* which appeared with the magazine *Piam-i-Yar* of Lucknow. In 1910 the *Dilgudaz* was resuscitated and commenced publication at Lucknow where Sharar had gone after his banishment from Hyderabad. In 1912 he was invited by Maulana Mohammad Ali as an editor of the *Hamdard* on a salary of rupees two hundred but the proposal did not materialise. In 1918 the Nizam Sir Usman Ali Khan Bahadur called Sharar to Hyderabad to write his life but the idea was given up and Sharar was asked to write the history of Islam relating to the period of Khilafat-i-Rashida, at Lucknow on a salary of rupees six hundred per mensem. Sharar compiled the history in three volumes of which the first volume is published and is included in the curriculum of the Osmania University. From 1910 onwards Sharar has employed himself in various literary pursuits. The output is very large and the works which are given below in chronological order range from brochures of a few pages to bulky volumes.

(1) Philipana. Novel, 1910.
(2) Ghaibdan Dulhan. Novel, 1911.
(3) Zawal-i-Bughdad. Novel, 1912.
(4) Asr-i-Qadim. History, 1912.
(5) Husn ka Daku. Novel, 1913, Part I.
(6) Husn ka Daku, Part II. Novel, 1914.
(7) Israr Darbar Harampur, Parts I and II. Novel, 1914.
(8) Rumat-ul-Kubra. Novel, 1914.
(9) Khaufnak Muhabbat. Novel, 1915.
(10) Alfonso. Novel, 1915.
(11) Hindustan ki Mausiqi; 1916 (a lecture delivered on Indian Music at Music Conference at Baroda).
(12) Fatah-o-Maftuh. Novel, 1916.
(13) Urdu se Hindi ka Taalluq, 1917 (a lecture read at Urdu Conference.)
(14) Tarikh Arz-i-Muqaddas. History, 1917.

(15) Babak Kharmi. Novel, 1917.
(16) Jua-i-Haq, Part I. Novel, 1917.
(17) Qirat-ul-Ain. Life, 1917.
(18) Masih-o-Masihat. History, 1917 (Part II of Tarikh Arz-i-Muqaddas).
(19) Babak Kharammi, Part II. Novel, 1918.
(20) Arab Qabl-az-Islam. History, 1918 (Part III of Tarikh Arz-i-Muqaddas)
(21) Lubat-i-Cheen. Novel, 1919.
(22) Jua-i-Haq, Part II. Novel, 1919.
(23) Khatim-ul-Mursalin. Life, 1919 (Part IV of Tarikh Arz-i-Muqaddas.
(24) Saqila-Min-Islam. History, 1919.
(25) Aziza-i-Misr. Novel, 1920.
(26) Asir-i-Babul, 1920 (a historical poem).
(27) Two parts of a history in Persian in 1921.
(28) Tahra. Novel, 1923.
(29) Wiladat Sarwar-i-Alam, Life of the Prophet, 1923 (translated from the Arabic).
(30) Tarikh-i-Khilafat. History, 1923.
(31) Islam ka Qanun-i-Wirasat. Lecture, 1924.
(32) Safarnama Imam Shaafi. Life and Travels, 1924.
(33) Mina Bazaar, 1925.
(34) San-i-Asnain and two other lectures, 1925.
(35) Mayyar-i-Zindagi, 1926, Lecture.
(36) Neki ka Phal. Novel, 1926.

Most of his lectures, articles, reviews and contributions have been published by Syed Mubarak Ali of Lahore after they had been systematically arranged by Sharar in eight volumes comprising 13 books under the comprehensive title of *Mazamin Sharar*. The most interesting and notable volume is the one which describes in excellent language the last phase of Lucknow civilization and it would prove a mine of information to the future research student of the period.

Outstanding features of Sharar's career.

Sharar had a very eventful career and the remarkable feature of his life is his daring as an enterprising journalist, an art then not much in vogue in India. His numerous ventures and his many trips to Hyderabad point to a restless spirit and bold ambitions. Another outstanding feature is his prolificness and his ease to turn out works of fiction by dozens. He is the author of more than fifty books which he produced with rapidity unrivalled in India. Another striking quality is his versatility. He is a novelist, a historian, an essayist, a critic, a man of letters, a reformer, a journalist, a dramatist, an educationist, and occasionally a politician.

Sharar as a novelist, his merits and defects.

As a novelist his position as a founder of historical novel has already been acknowledged but unfortunately the rapidity in composition and his prolificness never enable his novels to be works of art.

He worked at them with amazing haste and certain defects are noticeable which could have been avoided with more diligence and labour. His novels cover a wide range and relate to the various periods of History of different countries, the age of Crusades, the days of Moors in Spain, the early days of Mohammadans in India, the pre-Islamic and Islamic days in Arabia and the present times. Scenes are laid in Rome, Russia, Egypt, Native States of India and various other places. A deep study of the manners and customs of different people at different ages which the novels treat of was a necessary qualification for the novelist. Sharar was not fully equipped and hence there is an absence of 'local colour' which is required to make the novel realistic and distinctive. He has failed to catch the spirit of the times. His historical novels show little or no research and scholarship. There is no very proper setting to his themes. They are very superficial with no distinction of different customs, modes of thought, habits and turns of expression. They neither show any great imagination. Sharar's manner is essentially that of a journalist and not of a novelist to whom scholarship, close study and imagination are necessary equipments. In all these novels he has tried to glorify Islam sometimes at the expense of other religions and nationalities. They embody the spirit abroad, the spirit to revive the glory of Mohammadanism an important feature of the nineteenth century. The society novels dealing with the present age are conventional and contain the usual incidents and intrigues of lovers. *Dilkash* and *Dilchasp* are alike in the matter of treatment and in story. No great characterization is visible and the love described is not of a very high order. There is no dynamic quality in the character of his novels. Circumstances and situations may sometimes vary but the characters very much remain the same. There is no individuality in characters. One hero resembles the other. The language of the dialogue from the highest to the lowest is pitched in the same key and is often too highly polished to represent the real in life. Events do not move with natural progression but happen unexpectedly in a way different from what is demanded by the situation.

Sharar as a journalist.

As a journalist none excels him amongst his contemporaries. As a critic he was competent but was sometimes captious, prejudicial and combative. Sharar is a born fighter. The controversy which raged round Dayashankar's *Gulzar-i-Nasim* originating with Sharar in which he brought out all sorts of charges against the author and the work shows that his criticism was warped by his prejudices.

Sharar has, however, the courage of his convictions, and he has unhesitatingly placed his views before the public little caring

whose feelings and susceptibilities were being wounded. His articles on Sakina and Khandan Risalat and on the Purdah and his novels dealing with the life of the nawabs of Indian States caused widespread resentment. As a historian Sharar's work is commendable. His numerous books on history fostered the love for such books and created an interest in the past. His history of Sindh is well spoken of and his studies of the pre-Islamic days of Arabia are interesting if not very accurate and learned. As an essayist Sharar ranks very high and outruns his compeers and his short readable articles are sprightly and well informed. The *Dilgudaz* is a store-house of interesting essays on various subjects and is unrivalled in that respect. A very interesting account of the last King of Oudh and his court was appearing in its pages but it was cut short by the death of Sharar. He should not be judged as a dramatist for he produced only two literary dramas which are moderate in worth. As a journalist and an essayist he is pre-eminent.

His achievements.

His debt to Urdu novel is immense. He is the pioneer of historical novels in Urdu as Sir Walter Scott was of English. He systematised plot and devoted attention to the sustained evolution of character though both those things still admitted of great improvements. He widened the sphere of Urdu novel and gave it a status. Incidentally he demonstrated the capacity of plain unvarnished prose for all purposes. His Urdu is crisp and his style is admirably adapted for novels and essays. It found a number of imitators and the mushroom crop of novels that flood the market testify to his great success.

His position.

Abdul Halim Sharar with all his shortcomings has conferred great advantages on Urdu and by his numerous achievements is entitled particularly in the domain of the novel, essay, and history to be ranked as one of the leading writers of his age. He died in December 1926 A. D.

The popularity of the novel.

In the beginning of the present century the novel attained a popularity undreamt of. Cheap printing and postal facilities scattered the novels broadcast and brought a rich harvest of profit to the enterprising publishers. Most of the novels are of a catch-penny character. Sensation-mongering is their keynote. They are either hurried, inaccurate and garbled translations or adaptations of English novels or vapid original works of the dull and dry authors themselves. Most of the writers are hacks in the employment of the publishers. The number of authors good, bad and indifferent, is legion and a few important of ones outstanding merit could only be mentioned here.

Mirza Hadi Ruswa.

Mirza Mohammad Hadi Ruswa, B.A., Ph.D. with the poetical pseudonym of Mirza and Ruswa is the pupil in poetry of Auj. He wrote a drama called *Muraqqa-i-Lailah Majnun* which is quite clever. He writes poetry in the manner of Ghalib and mostly composes poems with Nature as his theme. His masterpiece in fiction is *Umrao Jan Ada* an autobiography of ■ literate dancing girl of Lucknow, Umrao Jan, poetically entitled Ada, in the middle of the nineteenth century. It is extremely readable, is written in a flowing picturesque style, with a systematic plot and with characters boldly brought out in relief. It is harmonious and consistent throughout and is exceeding entertaining. Nowhere could be found a greater air of verisimilitude or a more faithful copy from life. The language is very clear and sweet. There are pen-pictures of the life and society of that period which are truthful . without any exaggeration or for the heightening of effect. His other works are *Naubahar*, *Umeed-o-Bim*, *Khun-i-Ashiq*, *Khun-i-Joru*, *Sharif Zada* and *Zat-i-Sharif.* He is now employed in the translation bureau of the Osmania University at Hyderabad but the originality must be throttled out by the nature of his work.

Hakim Mohammad Ali.

Hakim Mohammad Ali who died recently was the author of a few novels, chief amongst them being *Ibrat*, *Hasan Sarwar*, *Dewal Devi*, *Gora*, *Nil ka Sanp*, *Ram Piyari*, *Jaafar-o-Abbasa* and *Akhtar-o-Hasina.* Some of these works in fiction are translations. *Nil ka Sanp* is the rendering of Haggard's *Cleopatra* or *Serpent of the Nile. Deval Deví* and *Jaafar-o-Abbasa* are historical novels. Hakim Mohammad Ali though superior to most of the Urdu novelists has not reached to the level of first class novelists. He has failed to catch the spirit of the times. There are no pictures of the periods or state of society he describes. He shows a lack of knowledge of human nature and is not skilful in probing into springs of motives, is monotonous and sermonizes too much.

Rashidul-Khairi.

Rashidul-Khairi of Delhi is said to be the successor to the style of Nazir Ahmad. He has devoted his attention to the womenfolk and their education, advancement, and woes are his favourite themes. He delights in tragedies of human life and has been called 'Musawwar-i-Gham' or Painter of Sorrows. He is a prolific writer. Some of his important novels are :—

1. Subah-i-Zindagi. 2. Sham-i-Zindagi. 3. Shab-i-Zindagi. 4. Nauha-i-Zindagi. 5. Johar-i-Qidamat. 6. Urus-i-Karbala. 7. Mah-i-Ajam. 8. Zurah-i-Maghrib. 9. Maududa.

Niyaz Fatehpuri.

Niyaz Fatehpuri is an old freelance in journalism and letters. He aims to be a stylist and loves to write in a sort of poetic prose. The effect is, however, marred when overdone and it has often the appearance of artificiality and labour. It needs more refinement and requires to be judiciously handled on subjects which can bear it suitably. To him, however, belongs the credit of opening another avenue and striking another vein. He has translated Tagore's *Gitanjali* into Urdu and often seeks for subject in Grecian or Roman Mythology. His 'Cupid and Psyche', 'Marrikh Sayyah ki Diary' or the Diary of a Man from Mars appear to be borrowed from English works. Some of his novels and works *Yek Shair ka Anjam* or Fate of a Poet and *Gahwar-i-Tamuddun* or Cradle of Civilization dealing with the part played by women in advancing the civilization, are readable and interesting. He is the editor of the 'Nigar', a high class Urdu Magazine in his characteristic style which contains translations, sometimes unacknowledged, from English works and periodicals.

Khwaja Hasan Nizami.

Khwaja Hasan Nizami of Delhi was born in 1390 A. H. of very poor parents, in the sanctuary of Khwaja Nizam-uddin Aulia in Delhi. He commenced his career by writing to papers. For some time past he was suspected by Government and was shadowed by the police. He enjoyed some influence by virtue of his position and his profession as a Sufi. He is the author of about 50 books and pamphlets, which are not always remarkable for very inspiring message or high thought. His *forte* is to write in an attractive manner about commonplace subjects and thoughts. He has a knack of inventing, arresting and queer titles. His style is lucid, simple, easy and attractive. His works do not show any profundity of thought. He has published about 10 books regarding the Mutiny. Some of them are translations and some relate to the wanderings and pathetic fates of the descendants of Bahadur Shah. His *Krishna Biti* is much liked by Sufis and Mohammadans. Some of his works are :—

1. Milad Nama. 2. Moharram Nama. 3. Yazid Nama. 4. Ghadr Delhi ke Afsanon ka Pahla Hissa. 5. Krishna Biti. 6. Bibi ki Talim. 7. Aulad ki Shadi. 8. Jag Biti Kahanian. 9. Khutut Akbar Allahabadi.

"Prem Chand."

The most promising writer in the domain of fiction is "Prem Chand" who commenced his career by writing short delightful stories very much in the style of Tagore. "Prem Chand" is the sobriquet of Munshi Dhanpat Rai, B. A., who was born in 1937 Sambat. His father's name is Munshi Ajaib Lal and he is a resident of a village near Pandey

Pur, Benares. He read Persian for about eight years in the beginning and then commenced the study of English and joined the Collegiate School of Benares from where he passed his Entrance Examination. He lost his father at the age of fifteen and his mother at the age of seven. He took up service in the education department and continued his studies privately. His literary career starts from 1901 and he wrote many articles in the *Zamana*. In 1904 he wrote and published a Hindi novel entitled 'Prema' from Indian Press, Allahabad. In 1912 he wrote *Jalwa-i-Aisar* and in 1918 *Bazar-i-Husn* in two parts. Prem Chand is equally adept in Hindi and he has written *Sewa Sadan*, *Prem Ashram*, *Rangbhumi*, *Kaya Kalp*. Urdu translations of these Hindi novels will be published. *Rangbhumi* is a drama of peculiar charm and beauty with the great tragedy of Karbala as the main theme. Urdu translation of it with the title of 'Karbala' is being published in the *Zamana* in instalments. His short stories are gems and shine resplendently amongst the dross of Urdu fiction. He is the first to find an interest in the peasantry of India and his pictures of life notably of rural area are extremely remarkable and truthful. He never exaggerates, never deviates from the truth and the natural. His works are finished and appear to be written with singular ease and force. His similes are delightful, homely and apt and add considerably to the interest and effect. He shows wonderful mastery over language, Urdu and Hindi, and has keen insight into the workings of human mind and various motives underlying human action. He has full knowledge of the weaknesses, prejudices and predilections that sway men and women in their thoughts and actions. Humour and pathos are brought into play as sunshine and shade. The characters are individualistic, distinctive, living and full of interest. He is at the best in his short stories of which he is the real originator in Urdu. His long novel *Bazar Husn* or 'Beauty Shop' in two volumes covers a wide canvas and loses some of its interest. With experience and practice in the craft Prem Chand has a brilliant future before him. Latterly he has been drawn towards Hindi for want of adequate appreciation by Urdu knowing people. Prem Chand wields a powerful and facile pen. He is a man of letters with progressive ideas in social reforms and political matters. His pregnant articles on Hindu-Muslim unity and on the New Age (Daur-i-Jadid) which appeared in the *Zamana* are remarkable.

His Urdu works are :—

1. Prem Pachchisi, Parts I and II } Collections of short
2. Prem Battisi, Parts I and II } stories.
3. **Bazar-i-Husn, Parts I and II**
4. **Karbala.**

Another capable writer of short stories is a gentleman from the Punjab who writes under the pseudonym of 'Sudarshan.' He shares all the qualities of 'Prem Chand' though in a lesser degree. He lacks the touches of a master and his language is not so literary nor flawless. He is the author of many books both original and translations and with practice and experience he is sure to rise to great heights.

"Sudarshan"

1. *Muhabbat ka Intiqam* which earned for the author a prize of Rs. 500 from the Punjab Government. It was originally written in Hindi but was rendered into Urdu.

2. *Chandan* with an introduction by Khwaja Hasan Nizami is a collection of fifteen short stories.

3. *Baharistan* with an introduction by Munshi Prem Chand is another collection of short stories.

4. *Tahzeeb ke Tazianey* is a translation of some of the trenchant and forceful articles of the famous Bengali satirist and novelist Bankim Chandra Chatterjea.

5. *Zahrila Ab-i-Ḥayat* is a translation of a Bengali novel from the pen of Bankim Chandra Chatterjea.

6. *Aurat ki Muhabbat* is another translation of a work of D. L. Roy.

7. *Begunah Mujrim* is another novel based on Bengali and French materials.

8. *Sada Bahar Phul* is a collection of eighteen short stories.

There are a host of writers of short stories in Urdu and it is impossible to mention the names of all or even to do scant justice to their powers and works. Hamid-ullah Afsar besides being a poet and critic of ability has also written short stories and a collection is being published under the title of 'Dali ka Jog' and other stories. Majnoon Gorakhpuri has also given some good stories. Khan Ahmad Hussain Khan, the editor of the *Shahab Urdu*, has written many clever short and long stories. Syed Abid Ali, Hakim Shuja and many other writers are worthy practitioners of the art. Zafar Umar has written excellent detective stories. There are many lady writers especially in the Punjab who deserve credit for writing interesting stories.

Other writers.

CHAPTER XVIII.

URDU DRAMA.

Urdu Drama.

Urdu Drama is an exotic having been transplanted on Urdu soil in the middle of 19th century. It has now taken roots and bids fair to have a steady and robust growth.

The universality of Drama.

The love for dramatic representation is inherent in every nation whether in the pinnacle of civilization or in the abyss of ignorance and barbarism. It is ingrained in human nature. In some countries this artistic instinct was repressed as the orthodoxy in Mohammadan countries tabooed all forms of imitation which included drama, sculpture, painting, dancing and music. The growth and development of fine arts is purely the history of heterodoxy or relaxation in orthodoxy in those countries. Hence Persian furnished no models to Urdu. Persian however could not escape the influence of the artistic instinct. The nearly crushed drama found a vent in the religious lamentations of passion-plays held to commemorate the tragic deaths of Hasan and Hussain on the fields of Karbala. Religion which was the domineering feature of the previous age used drama and every other form of literature as vehicles to propagate its morals. The miracle or mystery plays of the European continent and England evolved from the rich symbolic liturgy of the church, the religious plays in Sanskrit and in Hindi, the latter being played in temples and on festive occasions, the passion plays of Abermergau clearly point to their origins. In India religion still dominates the drama. Legends drawn from the rich store-house of the Purans and old mythology, skilfully or crudely woven into the web of drama invariably attract thousands. The people retire delighted with scenic effects, indigenous music and the morals the play inculcated.

Why classical Sanskrit Drama and Hindi Drama exercised no influence.

In India Drama had achieved a high level of efficiency. It was to be hoped that classical Sanskrit drama which had attained to a very high level of excellence would exercise no mean influence on Urdu Drama. It was unfortunate that Sanskrit as in the matter of prosody played no part in its formation. All the splendid heritage of Sanskrit drama was lost to Urdu which should have been a fit successor to it. The reasons are not far to seek. Sanskrit drama had passed its golden age. It was not a living thing and was sealed in books. Its masterpieces were not available in vernacular. It had ceased

to be acted. In the beginning the Buddhists and Jains shunned the drama but seeing its usefulness as a vehicle for spreading their doctrines, they patronised it and the Buddhist drama reached its apogee in the time of emperors Harsha and Ashok. With the decline of Buddhism and the ascendancy of Brahmanism, the drama could not retain its original position of honour because of the unsettled condition of the country due to the invasion of foreigners and to the lack of wealth. The drama degenerated and the profession lost its splendour and prestige. With the formation of companies by low class of people, the quality of dramas was greatly lowered, the actors were held in no esteem and the subject-matter was often obscene. At the time when Urdu was in its swaddling clothes the Sanskrit drama was a sealed book and the Hindi drama was in a degenerate condition. Besides Urdu from its infancy was caught in the meshes of Persian. Its wet nurse had ousted the legitimate mother. Persian traditions, literary usages and ideals dominated it. It was fondled by Persian scholars and it drank deep from the founts of Persian culture and literature. The apathy and indifference of the Sanskrit scholars threw the babe into the arms of Muslims completely. The Persian scholars as a rule cared very little for Sanskrit and its prosody and drama were thus lost. Had the scholars been a little versed in Bhasha and Sanskrit drama and cared for it or had the Pandits been a little zealous in the fostering of Urdu, its destiny would have been changed and it would have given crushing answers to the criticisms of many critics.

Ingredients of Urdu Drama.

Urdu drama as pointed out in an admirable article by Mr. Abdulla Yusuf Ali, I. C. S., is of composite character and the various influences which have gone to its formation can roughly be classified under the following heads :—

1. Classical Sanskrit drama.
2. Purely religious Hindu play or Hindu miracle plays and mythologies.
3. The Folk play as seen in *Swangs*, pageants, *Naqals*, and comic farces.
4. The Perso-Mohammadan love poetry and its legends.
5. English stage and modern European stage conditions.

Sanskrit drama.

Sanskrit drama has left very little impress on Urdu drama. Some of its masterpieces have been rendered into Urdu and adapted for stage. Lately a reaction has set in and some of its canons are being adopted notably the way in which the play opens. A prologue in which the *Sutradhar* or the master of ceremonies in company with his wife *Sutradharini* discourses and lays down the rough outline and the

purpose and heralds the advent of the play. The *Bidushak* or clown is also an inevitable concomitant of Hindustani drama but his sphere is removed and he is rarely allowed to interfere in the serious business of the play.

Hindu miracle plays and mythologies.

The Hindu mythologies have exercised considerable influence and have supplied Urdu drama with inexhaustible material to work upon. They are what Holinshed's Chronicles, Plutarch's Lives and Hall's Chronicles, were to Shakespeare. The germ of Urdu drama lies in these legends. From a very long time dramatic representations of the leading incidents of the lives of Rama and Krishna were given in temples on appropriate festivals to instruct the unlettered masses in the truths of their religon, to inculcate morals, to point out to their heroic deeds and beautiful lives and to awaken a lively sense of religion. The incidents from the *Ramayana* were exhibited and are still exhibited in Dashera festival when Rama returned triumphant after his conquest of the demon Ravana, the king of Ceylon. Appropriate verses from the *Ramayana* were recited. This has recently been dramatized into *Ram Natak* and the *Ramayan* and appeals widely and strongly to the religious-minded and to the ladies. The amorous ditties of Krishna exercised a great influence aud helped to bring the Urdu dramas into existence. 'The loves of Krishna and Radha are responsible for much of purely indigenous erotic poetry in Hindi and Bengali. There were many peripatetic *mundalis* or companies which went about giving performances and generally started from Muttra and B indraban the scene of such loves. Music and dancing were the main features of the performances.' These wandering companies had no status in society nor were wealthy and catered mostly for the populace. They toured from place to place, had impromptu stages, borrowed clothes occasionally from the washerman, rudely painted their faces and sometimes gave an improvisatorial performance in the light of torches on scanty payment. A lurid picture of their condition is drawn by Maulana Ghanimat in his famous masnavi *Nairang-i-Ishq* composed in the reign of Aurangzebe. He calls the performers *Bhagat baz.* Such performances made a strong appeal to the senses. Wajid Ali Shah of Oudh was noted for his luxury and voluptuousness. These performances found much favour in his eyes and he himself started many companies for his court. He himself disported personating the *Kanhaia* and his many dancing girls decked in the bejewelled and gorgeous dresses figuring as his *gopis.* The singing and dancing in modern Urdu drama are gifts of these *Rahas mundalis* and they were further strengthened by the imitation of operas imported from the French drama at the instance of the European companions of Wajid Ali Shah, " the Rangila Pia."

The *swangs* may aptly be compared to the Pageants which contributed to the growth of the English drama. Such *swangs* are often seen along with processions on festival days. They are crude mimicry but the seeds of comic farce are clearly discernible in them. The old *naqqals* or buffoons, a necessary accompaniment of noblemen and courts delighted their master and their guests with performances which ridiculed some well-known character or some indecorous custom. It was an art and required training. It counted singing and dancing as its necessary accomplishments. The *naqqals* may be said to have a counterpart in the wandering companies of Elizabethan noblemen's servants and retainers who played some part in the development of Elizabethan drama. Some of these *naqqals* or professional clowns had independent parties and were hired for the occasion. Mir has noticed them in a *qita* in one of his poems. Their butts were misers, Banias and dancing girls who were their rivals in profession. These interludes are responsible to a certain extent for the comic element and farce in the modern Urdu drama.

Folk play.

The Perso-Mohammadan poetry was the stock-in-trade of Urdu dramatists. 'Urdu poetry is peculiarly adapted for melodramatic and amorous purposes. The early dramas were full of rant, harangues pitched high and sweet melting maudlin love. The rhyming prose and poetry in which they were written were notably the products of Urdu. Urdu is capable of much vigour; its antithesis is very pleasing; its intonation is very sweet. It could thus easily be adopted for love or for war. It was equally potent to express many shades of emotion.' The Perso-Muhammudan poetry has furnished many stories for dramatization and once reigned in great popularity.

Perso-Mohammadan poetry and legends.

The influence of English stage and its traditions is immense. Urdu stage is flooded with translations from English dramas. "In stage-craft, in the mechanism of theatre, in scenery and costumes, in organisation and management of the audience, in the divisions of the play and the arrangement of the parts English influence is obvious."

English stage.

All these elements are being blended together and with time and attention Urdu drama is sure to emerge a splendid product.

Urdu dramas can easily be classified under the following heads :—

1. Original.
2. Translations.

There are very few original dramas and they relate to political, topical and social subjects. Translations are from

1. Sanskrit language.
2. English and European languages through English.
3. Persian stories.
4. Other vernaculars of the country principally Bengali, Marathi and now Hindi.

The stories of the dramas are from

1. Purans and Hindu mythology.
2. Perso-Arabic legends.
3. Indian legends.
4. Indian tales early, mediaeval and modern.
5. English and European stories.
6. Real life, present day politics and social evils.

The opulent and pleasure loving courts of the King of Delhi and the Nawab-king of Lucknow and their entertainments. How they influenced Urdu drama.

The earliest Urdu drama extant is the *Inder Sabha* (the Court of Indra) composed by Amanat, a pupil of the celebrated poet Nasikh and a courtier of Wajid Ali Shah who wrote it, it is said, at the instance of his master. A Hindi poet Nawaz made a translation of *Sakuntala* the world-famous play of Kalidas which has now been translated in many European and Asiatic languages. It was done by the cammand of Farrukh Siyyar but it was not a faithful translation as it was written in the manner of the great epic *Mahabharat*. It could not be called a drama in the modern sense as it had no entrances and exits for the characters, no characterization and little or no action. It was more or less a story and as it was written in Brij Bhasha and in *Dohas* it does not strictly pertain to the domain of Urdu. The comic farces or *naqals* and *Bahrupias* were very popular with the later Mughals and Nawabs of Oudh and such performances were well applauded and munificently rewarded. The merry monarch of India Mohamad Shah popularly known as Rangila Badshah it is said, was in the midst of a comic farce whilst the army of Nadir Shah was advancing on Delhi and news could only be announced to him through these professional clowns. These *naqals* had no *littera scripta* and were often impromptu performances improvised at the suggestion of the monarch to excite ridicule and laughter and to afford pleasure and amusement. Lucknow followed suit and with the establishment of the capital at Lucknow and security of the dynasty the Nawabs indulged in pleasures and refined sensualism. The reign of Wajid Ali Shah saw the high watermark of opulence, luxury, splendour and pomp. "There was wealth, luxury, gaiety, frivolity, dancing and music on all

sides ; gallant men and amorous women ; life glided on a path of roses through fragrant orange groves cheered by music of songs and led by the sportive leaders of the rosy hours and the land of the lotus-eaters seemed but a pale reflection of the fairy land in which thousands passed their lives in mirth and laughter. Princes and noblemen, courtiers and grandees, lapped in luxury and waited on by the splendours of the world presented a magnificent spectacle to the eye." It was in such a court that Urdu drama took its rise. The courtiers and the companions of Wajid Ali Shah were always devising new means to afford amusement, diversion and fun to their gay master. One of the French companions mooted the idea of stage and presented the scheme of opera which was in the heyday of populrity in France. It was readily accepted as it could utilise the thousands of beautiful singers who thronged the Court. Amanat was asked to write the play and give it an Indian garb. He wrote *Inder Sabha* in 1270 A. H. (1853 A D.) It is a musical comedy, a sort of an opera. As soon as the play was ready a stage was erected in the Qaisar Bagh and gorgeously decorated. Wajid Ali it is said took up the role of Rajah Inder whose counterpart he thought himself on earth and his courtiers were assigued other parts appropriate to them. The dancing girls bejewelled and superbly dressed acted as Peris and the epicurian Nawab disported with them. They were private theatricals and no outsider could gain admittance. A controversy has been going on about the part played by the foreigners in ushering the Urdu drama into existence. Abdul Halim Sharar has challenged this statement and has averred that no foreigner was responsible for its birth. The origin is clouded in obscurity and there is no authoritative history of the period which could throw light on this directly but it appears that the foreigners did play some part in moulding Urdu drama in its genesis and at least in furnishing the germ of the idea about the form of the composition and equipment of the stage. Nur Ilahi and Mohammad Umar in their book entitled *Natak Sagar* have marshalled facts in reply and depend upon the oral traditions of Balliwala Khurshedji, an actor of the period and the internal evidence furnished by the Inder Sabha, the presence of the Europeans, the borrowing of the stage equipment and the fondness of Wajid Ali Shah for new diversions and sensations. It however cannot be said with any degree of certainty that Wajid Ali Shah and his courtiers took part in the acting or that the Inder Sabha was just staged in Qaisar Bagh for the exclusive delectation of the King or that Amanat wrote it at his express command.

Plot of Inder Sabha.

' The plot is of the thinnest. The play opens with the scene of Raja Inder's Court, the Inder Sabha proper in which Raja Inder is shown seated in a gorgeous throne in a magnificent hall with rows of courtiers on

either side and two *Deos* Lal Deo and Kala Deo in attendance. Peris are then introduced one by one. Pukhraj Peri of topaz resplendence comes first, Nilam Peri of sapphire hue next, the Lal Pari of ruby lustre and last but not the least appears Sabz Peri of emerald sheen, the heroine of the play. Each of these Peris in succession dressed in gorgeous costumes entertains the audience with a rich variety of dances and songs, *i.e.*, ghazal, chhands, thumris, basants, dhan bahar, holi, sawan and choubola and then the curtain falls. In the second scene Sabz Peri who had fallen in love with a mortal named Gulfam (Rose face) takes Kala Deo in her confidence and asks him to transport her beloved from the mundane regions to her boudoir. Kala Deo complies with her request and then follows an interesting and enlivening scene of the advances of Sabz Peri and the rebuffs of the young prince. So much is the Peri enamoured of Gulfam that she on his insistent demands takes him to see the Court of Inder where his presence is detected and as a punishment for intrusion is thrown into the well to die and the Peri is exiled with her wings clipped. The Peri is however full of resources and burning for her beloved disguises herself as a *jogin* and charms the ear of Inder with her enchanting melodies. She is allowed to name her own gift as a reward for her enthralling songs and she throws off her disguise disclosing her identity and asks for Gulfam with whom she is united in a further dazzling scene of dance and song.'

The love of mortals for celestials is conventional in Urdu tales and romances. The Peris of Persian mythology whose seat is Mount Caucasus are pitchforked with the God of Hindu mythology—Inder, but the anomaly is only apparent and not real. The Court of Inder is peopled with *Aphsaras* whose equivalent in Urdu is Peri and instead of using a word of Sanskrit origin a familiar Persian word is employed. The action is very weak indeed and there is absolutely no characterization. The language is clear, simple and idiomatic. Even ordinary conversation is carried on in verses.

Inder Sabha took the world by storm. It leapt into instant popularity. The secret of its phenomenal success lies in the beauty of its various songs which are of high order and are the delight of the music-loving audience, for its gorgeousness and splendour and its scenic effects. So great was its success that Madarilal produced another *Inder Sabha* which though superior to Amanat's play in dramatic merit is however superior to it in some measure in literary value. The popularity of *Inder Sabha* never diminished but grew apace and it was *piece de resistance* in the *repertoire* of the theatrical companies. So great was its demand that it was printed in various characters such as Devanagri,

Gujerati and Gurmukhi and at various places and there are at least forty editions in the India Office Library. It was also translated in German and printed at Leipzig in 1892 A. D. The publication commenced in 1867 and it is now contemplated to bring out a critical and an authoritative edition of the Indor Sabha at Lahore.

The Parsis and Urdu drama. The Original Theatrical Company of Pestonji Framji.

With the deposition and deportation of Wajid Ali Shah festivities and frolics at Qaisar Bagh came to an end. *Inder Sabha* found no home at Lucknow with its turmoil and tribulations and it travelled forth to Bombay. So great was the popularity of *Inder Sabha* that it came to be exhibited in fairs and other places of public resort on the cheapest scale as *paisa* performance. Most of the plays shown in the market related to the mythology of Hindus and hence did not command universal popularity. Some Parsi youths came forward to celebrate stories from Persian mythology and put up impromptu plays of Rustom and Sohrab on improvised stage. These crude and immature performances were criticised by those who had seen European theatres and advice was freely given. The business instincts of the Parsis were aroused who saw a vast field for themselves. The idea was taken up as a business proposition. It was about this time that the enterprising community of Parsis in India launched theatrical companies in big towns such as Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta in imitation of English theatres to cater for the amusement of the public. Seth Pestonji Framji is the father and hero of the Urdu stage. He was also conversant with the language and wrote verses under the pseudonym of Raug and Parvin consulting Nawab Ali Nafees in poetical matters. He floated a company called the 'Original Theatrical Company.' The most notable actors were Pārsis, Khurshedji Balliwala, Cowasji Khattau, Sohrabji and Jehangirji.

The language chosen for the drama was Urdu, not as it is spoken in all its purity amongst scholars in Delhi and Lucknow but intelligible to all. The aim of the dramatic company was commercial and it employed the language understood in Bombay, Gujerat, Bengal and other parts of India. Poetry was invariably used in drama to lend vigour and charm and because of the fact that its prototype *Inder Sabha* was in verse. Muhammad Mian Raunaq Benarasi wrote plays for the company and for other companies which sprouted forth later. He also adapted plays from English and resided mostly in Bombay. He was flourishing in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. One of his plays is called *Insaf-i-Mahmud Shah* which was printed in Bombay in Gujerati characters in 1882 A. D. Afterwards Hussaini Mian Zarif wrote copiously and flooded the market with many plays

Raunaq resided at Bombay. The following are some of the many plays written by Zarif:—

1. Natija-i-Asmat.
2. Khuda Dost.
3. Chand Bibi.
4. Tohfa-i-Dilkusha.
5. Bulbul-i-Bimar (mentioned in Fisana-i-Azad of Sarshar).
6. Tuhfa-i-Dilpazir
7. Shirin Farhad.
8. Ali Baba
9. Leila-o-Majnun.
10. Gul Bakawali.
11. Chitra Bakawali.
12. Hawai-Majlis.
13. Hatim Tai.
14. Gul Sanobar.
15. Badr Munir.
16. Tamasha-i-Ala-uddin also called Chiragh-i-Ajib, Bombay, 1889.
17. Naqsh Suleimani.
18. Aksir-i-Azam.
19. Ishrat Sabha.
20. Furrukh Sabha.
21. Husn Afroz.
22. Chhal Batao.
23. Nairang-i-Ishq.
24. Sitam-i-Haman.
25. Fareb Fitna.
26. Nasir-o-Humayun.
27. Matma-i-Zafar.
28. Bazm Suleiman.
29. Lal Gohur.
30. Khudadad.

The Original Theatrical Company popularised drama to a great extent. It weaned people from other forms of entertainments. On the death of Framji the Company broke down and Balliwala and Cowasji started their separate companies.

The Victoria Natak Company of Balliwala Talib Benarsi the Dramatist.

Balliwala was the sole proprietor of the Theatrical Company which set up a theatre at Delhi in 1877 A. D. at the time of Lord Lytton's Darbar. Balliwala was one of the greatest comic actors. He was a genius in his line, a born actor with superb gifts. There was nothing of horse-play or coarseness in him. He never believed in tags of which Shakespeare stood in awe. At his entrance the audience used to roar with laughter. Other artists in his troupe who contributed to the success of the Company were Rustomji, Miss Khurshed, Miss Mehtab and an European actress Miss Mary Fenton who achieved considerable renown in singing Hindustani songs. Balliwala was adventurous in spirit and he took the company to England where however it sustained heavy losses which were made up on its return to Bombay. Vinayak Prasad Talib of Benares was chosen as a play-wright of this company. He was a poet and a pupil of Rasikh Delhvi. He was a great writer of plays and improved the tone and language of the drama. He died in 1914 A. D. One of his famous dramas *Lail-o-Nihar* is based on Lytton's 'Day and

Morning' and preserves in some measure the beauty of the original. Some of his other most notable plays are :—

1. Vikram Vilas.
2. Dileir Dilsher.
3. Nazan.
4. Nigah-i-Ghaflat.
5. Gopichand.
6. Harishchandra.

The Company went to pieces on the death of Balliwala who used to act in all the plays of Raunaq.

The Alfred Theatrical Company of Cowasji.

Cowasji Khattau started a rival company called the Alfred Theatrical Company. Cowasji was a superb tragedian. He is called the Irving of India a title which he more than anybody else deserved. He acted the part of Romeo and Hamlet in a masterly manner. Like Balliwala he was a born actor. He died of diabetes at Lahore in 1914 A. D. Some of his other famous actors were Mancher Shah, Gulzar Khan, Madho Ram, Master Mohan, Master Mancherji, Miss Zohra and Miss Gohur. Cowasji's son Jahangirji ran the show for about four or five years and then sold it to Mr. Madan who died in 1923 A. D. The first play-wright of this company was Ahsan Lucknavi.

Ahsan Lucknavi.

Syed Mehdi Hasan Lucknavi is the grandson of Hakim Nawab Mirza Shauq of Lucknow, the famous author of masnavis, Zahr Ishq and Bahar Ishq. He is not only proficient in writing verses but is also skilled in music. He writes pure idiomatic Urdu and was then eminently qualified to write dramas. He has also written a life of Anis the great marsia writer and is an adept in reciting the marsias. He also tried to popularise Shakespeare on Indian stage. His plays are

1. Hamlet
2. Gulnar Feroz.
3. Chandravali.
4. Dilfarosh.
5. Bhul Bhulaiyan.
6. Bakavali.
7. Chalta Purza.

Betab Delhvi.

After Ahsan, Pandit Narayan Prasad Betab of Delhi was chosen to write dramas. Betab was first noticed by the proprietor of Parsi Natak Mandli whose name was Framji Appu who had however no keen aptitude for drama as a businessman. Betab was the son of Maharaj Dahlarai. He took lessons in prosody and poetry from Sardar Mohammad Khan, Talib, pupil of Ghalib. He also submitted his poems for correction to Nazir Hussain Sakha. He took up play-writing as a profession and resided at Bombay. He

issued a magazine now defunct entitled 'Shakespeare' which published Urdu translations from the plays of the Bard of Avon. Some of his plays are

1. Qatl-i-Nazir.
2. Zahri Sanp.
3. Fareb Muhabbat.
4. Mahabharat.
5. Ramayan.
6. Gorakh Dhanda, the first play staged in the Alfred Company.
7. Patni Pratap.
8. Krishna Sudama, 1922.

Qatl-i-Nazir was the first play written by Betab for the Alfred Theatrical Company and it owed its popularity to a certain extent to the fact that a prostitute of the name of Nazir of Delhi had been killed just then and it was the talk of the city. Mahabharat of Betab first played in 1913 A. D. at Delhi created quite a sensation for some time wherever it was first staged and still holds the field as one of the best Urdu plays Betab found no difficulty in extracting this work from the *Mahabharat* a storehouse of stirring episodes. His talent however is abundantly displayed in hitting off the salient points and giving them artistic touch or tone. He uses his Hindi with conscious command and the effect is instantaneous for in songs or lyrics Hindi is infinitely superior to Urdu. He has woven various episodes *viz.*, Draupadi's tearing of the *Sari* to bind the bleeding finger of Shri Krishna and the stories of Seva and Cheta Chamars with great skill and effect. The scene in which attempt is made to disrobe Draupadi has been condemned as repugnant to the highest canons of art as found in Sanskrit and in English but it is liked because of the faith of the devout and because of its proving the prowess of the hero Lord Krishna. Another defect noticed is "the old world attempt at representing Hell and Heaven on the stage by childish and primitive devices. The language af Betab also is capable of great improvement. Rhyming prose is obstrusively common. Sanskrit words and phrases are often indiscriminately placed cheek by jowl with Arabic and Persian words thus producing an incongruous effect. Verses are sometimes too frequently employed in dialogues, even in heated discussions which gives an air of artificiality to the scene". With all these defects Betab improved considerably on the then existing drama. It is also alleged by some of his opponents that Betab being an Arya Samajist gave utterance to sentiments which were disliked by Hindus but there is no substance in this. The fame of his plays however was heightened by the excellence of acting and singing of beautiful actresses such as Miss Gohur. "His passion is intense and characterization forceful and he has a keen sense of the dramatic." Urdu drama made a distinct advance under him.

New Alfred Company of Mohammad Ali and Sohrabji.

Mohammad Ali Nakhuda floated a Company on the lines of the Alfred and christened it 'the New Alfred'. Its managing director was Sohrabji a great comic actor who subsequently became a partner in the concern. It established its headquarters at Ahmedabad after a chequered career. Abbas Ali who afterwards joined the Jubilee Company, and Amrit Lal Keshav were great actors and belonged to this company. Amrit Lal had connections with Miss Gohur another beautiful and good actress and they both joined the Parsi Natak Mandli of Framji Appu who gave the management of the company to Amrit Lal and who produced the play *Amrit* which was a result of collaboration of many hands. Amrit Lal however died in the prime of his age due largely to his riotous and gay life. The principal play-wright was Agha Mohammad Shah Hashr.

Hashr Kashmiri. The Shakespeare Theatrical Company.

Hashr is a native of Kashmir but his family has long been residing at Benares being engaged in trade of shawls. Hashr was born at Amritsar. He is a versatile man. He wrote many dramas for the New Alfred borrowing the plots from English and European writers. He composed a few original ones himself. He started a company of his own called the Shakespeare Theatrical Company after leaving the New Alfred. After a short-lived career of triumph it expired at Sialkot causing much financial loss. Agha Hashr went to Calcutta and became a film actor in Madan and Co. on a decent salary. He occasionally indulges in the writing of dramas even when employed in the film industry.

The following is the list of his plays :—

1. Shahid-i-Naz.
2. Murid-i-Shak.
5. Mithi Chhuri.
4. Khuab-i-Hasti.
5. Thandi Ag.
6. Asir-i-Hirs.
7. Taswir-i-wafa.
8. Nara-i-Tauheed.
9. Said-i-Hawas.
10. Sufaid Khun.
11. Khubsurat Bala.
12. Khud Parast.
13. Silver King.
14. Sham-i-Jawani.
15. Turki Hur.
16. Hindustan Qadim-o-Jadid.
17. Jurm-i-Nazr.
18. Ankh-ka-Nasha.

Hindi plays.

1. Surdass.
2. Ganga Utran.
3. Ban Devi.
4. Sita Banbas.
5. Madho Murli.
6. Shravan Kumar.

Agha Hashr has been called the 'Marlowe of Urdu stage'. "He delineates with the force and vigour of a Marlowe. His characters stand out in bold relief for the intensity of their feelings. His love is passionate ; his pathos is harrowing and his grief knows no bounds. His versatility and mastery of prose and verse, his

vivacity of thoughts are displayed to advantage when he makes a pair of diametrically opposite characters thrust and parry as in a duel. Such scenes are many and will be found in *Asir-i-Hirs*, *Khubsurat Bala* and *Surdass.* "His defects are precisely those of Marlowe. Intensity rather than delicacy, deep colours and strong contrasts more than fine shades are the rule. This tells on refined or sensitive nerves particularly when the most horrible crimes are allowed by the author to be represented on the stage." He is also charged with giving currency to the fashion of interweaving two different plots in the same play thus distracting attention and ruining *denouement*. Poetry often subordinates the action and is indulged in for its own sake. Paltry and contemptible jokes are also introduced sometimes which mar the beauty of the scene. He is occasionally very hasty and has not full control over the action of his play. With all his defects he is a notable personality and his works are creditable performances in Urdu dramatic literature.

Other Urdu Theatrical Companies of India.

Old Parsi Theatrical Company came into being in the last century. It had an eventful career. In 1901 A. D. it was burnt at Lahore but phœnix-like it revived again under the fostering care of its proprietor Seth Ardeshir who is also a great actor. The Jubilee Company of Delhi was started by a wealthy but profligate man of Delhi under the guidance of Syed Abbas Ali, a great actor, but had a short-lived life. Abbas Ali acted in Gulru Zarina and Jan-i-Jahan Numa. Various other companies were started and were closed owing to want of wise management and finances. The Bharat Viyakul Company of Meerut after a short dazzling career with its wonderful play *Buddha Bhagwan* expired at Ahmedabad. The Imperial Company and the Light of India Company may be mentioned as two of their actors Hafiz Mohammad Abdulla and Mirza Nazir Beg Akberabadi composed a few dramas and recast and adapted many old ones which they sent out as their own

The following is the list of some of their plays :—

HAFIZ MOHAMMAD ABDULLA.

1. Jashna Parastan, 1883.
2. Sitam-i-Haman.
3. Anjam-i-Sitam, 1886.
4. Fitna-i-Khanum.
5. Police Natak, 1891.
6. Ashiq Janbaz.
7. Zohra-o-Bahram.
8. Insaf Mahmud.
9. Hira Ranjha.
10. Nur Jahan.
11. Leilah-o-Majnun.
12. Farhad Shirin.
13. Tamasha-i-Dilpazir. The story of Benazir and Badr-i-Munir.

MIRZA NAZIR BEG, A PUPIL OF HAFIZ ABDULLA.

1. Nal Daman, 1893
2. Bahar-i-Ishq.
3. Ram Lila.
4. Mahigir.
5. Fisana-i-Ajaib, 1884.
6. Saraush-i-Sakhun.
7. Abul Hasan.

Dramatist in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

Many prominent play-wrights of the period such as Hafiz Mohammad Abdulla, Mirza Nazir Beg, Mian Raunaq have been mentioned. A few minor dramatists may also be named. Some of their works are preserved in the India Office Library. Ghulam Hussain Zarif wrote *Anjam-i-Sakhaawt*, 1889, Mohammad Abdul Wahid Qais wrote *Anjam-Nek-o-bad Insan*, 1892, and *Jalsah-i-Paristan*, 1892. Fakir Mohammad Tegh wrote *Anjam-i-Ulfat*, 1881, and *Benazir Badr-i-Munir*, 1879. Firoz Shah Khan wrote *Bhul Bhulaiyan* (Shakespeare's Comedy of Errors) 1896; Ahmad Hussain Wafir wrote *Bimar-i-Bulbul*, 1870; Mir Karamat Ullah, Abdul Majid, Maqsud Ali, Umrao Ali who wrote *Ilbert Bill*, probably, the first political drama in Urdu and who also adapted Shakespeare's Hamlet under the name of Jehangir were some of the numerous hacks of the period.

Dramatists in the early decades of the twentieth century.

Some of the dramatists are already noticed. A few remarkable ones may find a place here. Munshi Ghulam Ali Diwana who is also an actor is the author of *Taiyed-i-Yazdani* and *Maharajia* and is attached to the Alexandra Theatrical Company. Munshi Ibrahim Mahshar of Amballa follows his master Hashr in his art and is a successful dramatist. His plays are :—

1. Atshi Nag.
2. Nigah-i-Naz.
3. Khud Parast.
4. Dozakhi Hur.
5. Shakuntala.
6. Josh-i-Tauheed.
7. Jang-i-German.
8. Sunahri Khanjar.
9. Rasila Jogi.
10. Mira Bai.
11. Hamara Khuda.
12. Chamakti Bijli.

Munshi Rahmat Ali is an actor-dramatist and has gained considerable fame in the histrionic world. He is the author of *Dard-i-Jigar*, *Ba-wafa Qatil*, *Muhabbat ka Phool* and *Taswir-i-Rahmat*. Formerly he managed the Albert Theatrical Company but now he is the director of the Parsi Theatrical Company of Bombay. Dwarka Prasad Ufq is the author of *Ram Natak* describing the exploits of Rama but the play is of inordinate length. Mirza Abbas has written the following :—

1. Nur Jehan.
2. Nur Islam.
3. Madan Manjari.
4. Sarkari Jasus.
5. Shahi Farman, 1923.

Agha Shair Qazalbash of Delhi, a pupil of Dagh, wrote an unsuccessful play called *Hur-i-Jinnat*. Lala Kishan Chand Zeba and Lala Natak Chand Naz of the Punjab are the authors of many dramas but the tendency to introduce too many uncommon Hindi words is pronounced in their language and there are far too many instances of unfamiliar bilingualism in their plays. Lala

Kunwar Sen, M. A., Chief Justice, High Court, Kashmir, formerly Principal of the Law College, Lahore, an eminent critic of dramas, has broken new ground in his admirable play *Brahmand Natak* by using the heavenly bodies as *dramatis personæ* Bishamber Sahai Byakul is the author of *Budh-deva* or Lord Buddha, a masterpiece which had an extraordinary run. It is a wonderful drama highly artistic in tone and extremely noble in its character. It is the drama of *shantiras* (repose). It avoids the many faults commonly found in Urdu dramas. Byakul was the life and soul of the famous Bharat Byakul Company which was ushered into existence by some enthusiasts of Meerut. It shot into brilliance and became the leading Company of Northern India. It had educated actors who were recruited from a good class of society. Ali Athar was a renowned actor of this Company. Munshi Janeshwar Prasad Mail of Delhi, the editor of the magazine 'Zaban' wrote two plays *Nur Hind alias Chandra Gupta* and *Tegh-i-Sitam* for this company. Hakim Ahmad Shuja, B. A., Assistant Secretary, Legislative Council, Punjab and the editor of the *Hazar Dastan*, is also a dramatist of no mean order besides being a writer of fiction. He is the author of *Bap ka Gunah*, *Bharat ka Lal*, *Akhri Farun*, *Janbaz*, and has adapted three Bengali dramas into Urdu. His dramas, however, do not show off well on the stage. Mir Imtiaz Ali Taj, B. A., has written *Anarkali*, *Dulhan*, and is engaged on translating 'Racines Alexander' into Urdu. Syed Dilawar Shah wrote *Punjab Mail* for Alexandra Theatrical Company which is mediocre. Khan Ahmad Hussain who has already been noticed for his stories *Nazir Begum*, *Hasrat*, *Ah*, *Soz*, *Aina-i-Rozgar*, *Shama-i-Sahr*, *Dard*, *Wah*, *Geti Ara*, *Gulbadan*, *Surkh Harf*, *Makafat-i-Amal*, *Dilkey Tukdey*, *Wuh Aurat Jisney kar Dikhaya*, wrote *Husn ka Bazar* which did not achieve any appreciable success. Radhey Shiam has written many dramas some of whose themes are borrowed from the *Puranas* and some are of social interest. He is highly successful on the stage and his plays have a popular appeal. 'Sudarshan' has written some farces and has translated and adapted a few plays. Some of the minor play-wrights are Afsoon Banarsi who was in the employment of Parsi Natak Mandli and used to reside in Bombay where he originally started as an embroiderer ; Abdul Latif Shad ; Abbas Ali, Nazan Delhvi ; Afsoon Mooradabadi. Prem Chand's *Karbala* has already been noticed.

Political, social and literary dramas.

These are very few literary dramas in Urdu for there is no encouragement for them. Shauq Qidwai wrote 'Lucy and Macpherson' and *Qasim-o-Zuhra*. Abdul Halim Sharar wrote *Shahid-i-Wafa*. Aziz Mirza translated *Wikram Urwasi* of Kalidass into Urdu. Maulvi Zafar Ali Khan wrote 'Rus-o-Japan.' Syed Tafazzul Hussain Nasir made an admirable translation of Henry V under the title of

Taskhir-i-France and *Julius Caesar*. Pandit Jwala Prasad Barq translated many Shakespeare's plays. His *Mashuqa-i-Farang* (Romeo and Juliet) is in verse. Hakim Azhar, Editor of the *Tahrik*, wrote the *Bedari* (Awakening). Imtiaz Ali has rendered *Hamlet* into Urdu. Munshi Mohammad Umar, Translator, High Court, Jammu Kashmir and Nur Ilahi, the famous authors of *Natak Sagar*, a compendious though not fully complete history of drama of every country and which has been substantially used in the preparation of the chapter are the authors of many plays. They aim at translating into Urdu many of the best plays of the world and adapting them for the Urdu stage. Their efforts and zeal are commendable. They have acquired considerable proficiency and with experience will gain mastery over the language, technique and form of the drama. Their plays deserve praise and encouragement and show that the author's touch is certain. Some of the plays are :—

1. *Ruh-i-Siyasat*, dealing with the life and mission of the President Abraham Lincoln of the United States of America.

2. *Jan-i-Zarafat*, a translation of one of the famous comedies of the French dramatist Moliere having a fling at the misers.

3. *Qazzaq*, a translation of the Robber of Schiller the great German poet and dramatist.

4. *Bigre Dil*, another translation of one of the comedies of Moliere.

5. *Zafar ki Maut*, a translation of a play of Matterlick.

The social dramas are few. Abdul Majid Daryabadi wrote *Zood Pasheman* which deals with marriage problems. Pandit Brij Mohan Dattatriya Kaifi, M. A., a poet of note and a profuse contributor of merit to the magazines is a dramatist of great promise and distinction. He is employed as an Assistant Foreign Secretary in Kashmir State. In 1924 he published a short collection of his poems entitled *Khum Khana-i-Kaifi*. He is the author of *Raj Dulari* and *Murari Dada*. *Raj Dulari* obtained recognition by the Punjab University. Mr. Kunwar Sen has the following criticism to offer—"They are prose dramas of modern social and home life and while holding the mirror upto nature for educated Indians, aim at reform. The thoughts, the weaknesses, frolics and foibles of the men and women of upper middle society are delineated with remarkable success. The style is racy, the language is thoroughly idiomatic, and the tone is scrupulously chaste. They are as it were Jane Austen's Novels dramatised by a Bernard Shaw. Only the author lacks the shavian courage to push his heterodoxy to its logical conclusion." Abdul Halim Sharar wrote *Mewa-i-Talkh* on the evils of the rigour of the Purdah system. Many modern plays deal with the social ques-

tions directly and indirectly and more often than not cast ridicule on and have a fling at the extreme westernising of Indians.

There are very few political dramas and none of them are of any striking merit. *Ilbert Bill* by Umrao Ali published in Lahore in 1893 was written when the controversy over the Bill was raging. *Sama Sair* dealt with the aims of the Indian National Congress. Both were ephemeral with no literary interest. During the time of the Non-co-operation Movement many rabid plays of no literary worth were produced and some were proscribed. None of them deserves any notice except *Zakhmi Punjab* of Kishen Chand Zeba.

Contributions of the various writers to the development of Urdu drama.

Inder Sabha laid the foundation of Urdu Drama. It is an opera with a weak plot and with no characterization. Zarif's claim to be remembered is that he fostered the growth of the newly-born drama by writing plays and to popularise Hindustani or Urdu in various parts of India where those plays were acted. Zarif wrote to divert and to amuse. There is no or very little plot architecture and no characterization. The touch is uncertain. Poetry and prose employed in plays are crude, raw and immature. Hafiz Mohammad Abdulla and Mirza Naseer Beg followed Zarif and employed two distinct plots in their plays. Talib and Ahsan improved the tone and the language of the plays to a great extent. They merged the two plots into one and a few subsidiary characters in the same plot played the part of a buffoon. Comedy was a side show in the same story. Rhymed prose was employed for conversation instead of poetry which was relegated to the songs. Verses however were frequently used to lend force, vigour and point to the dialogues. The songs were all in Hindi. The drama was no longer an opera. Greater attention was paid to characterization, action, expression and *denouement* of the drama. Talib was the first to introduce Persian words in the songs which were purely in Hindi. Hashr reverted to the employment of two distinct plots in the same play. His characteristics have been noticed above. Betab shot into public fame by his famous plays *Mahabharat* and *Ramayan*. Instead of seeking for subjects elsewhere he went to immortal Vyas' work which is itself a drama *in excelsis*. His merits and demerits have been noted in an appropriate place. Most of his defects were avoided by Bishamber Sahai in his *Buddha Deva.* The language is not high flown Urdu but a robust, vigorous vocabulary spiced with Hindi words. The sentiments are noble and treatment highly artistic. Kunwar Sen's *Brahmand Natak* trenches on the domain of Science, and is highly skilful and clever. Brij Mohan Dattatriya wrote on social subjects. *Nur-i-Watan* and *Ittifaq* are unequivocally political in

theme. Historical dramas are greatly in vogue and have been received in heritage through translations from some of the notable Bengali plays of considerable merit. Indian mythologies and Indian history are being ransacked, contemporary dramas are being translated, European and English plays are being adapted and original ones are being composed. Urdu drama is thus coming into its own.

Causes of the late appearance of Urdu drama.

It has been hinted above why Urdu drama was late in making its appearance. The Sanskrit and Hindi dramas had decayed and declined. They were no longer in vogue or on stage. The translations of Sanskrit plays published by scholars like Sir William Jones, Monier Williams and Professor Wilson were scholarly in character and were in English language which could not be understood by those who presided at the destiny of Urdu drama. Persian had no model to offer. The earliest fathers and patrons of Urdu were all Persian scholars in love with Persian. They knew little or no Sanskrit and did not care to know any. It was from the impact received from the West that Urdu drama really takes a start. It was at a later date that dramatists sought for their inspiration in Sanskrit dramas mostly through translations.

The early drama. Victorian drama (1854-1900 A. D.)

The early drama is never literary in character. The early Urdu drama prospered because it was a paying concern. The enterprising Parsi community took it up as a business proposition. The pecuniary success and popularity which attended the formation of theatrical companies gave a powerful stimulus to the writing of plays. All available materials were laid under contribution and all existing stores ransacked. Legends from Arabian Nights, translations from and adaptation of Perso-Arabic mythology, Romances from Indian legends and story books, mythological tales from the Purans and later on translations, crude, imperfect and utterly unfaithful, from Shakespeare were made to pass through the mill of drama and served up to the delight of theatre-going public even though ill-cooked, with the paraphernalia of songs, dances, jokes and scenic effects. The playwrights were mostly actors and recruited from the theatre enthusiasts and old plays were garbled and vamped and presented as new, with the conditions of the stage always in view. Sometimes hacks were employed who worked under the guidance and supervision of the manager-director of the company.

Characteristics of the Victorian Urdu drama.

The dramas were written in stiff slow prose copiously interlarded with verses. Persons carried on conversation in strings of couplets and sometimes even in long ghazals. The verses were not of high order and were stilted and halting. The prose

was extremely artificial and immature. There was no or very little of plot-architecture, no characterization, and abrupt action. Harrowing tragedy and farcical comedy were mixed together in the same plot after the manner of the pre-Shakespearean times. The moral tone of these dramas was very low and very often revolting to the decorous play-goers. Kissing and hugging, lewd remarks and indecent gestures were most frequently indulged in to the delight of the four-anna gallery. Obscene gibes and indecorous tags were often flung in farces by actors and by actresses the latter being recruited mostly from the professional singers and dancers mostly prostitutes of low degree. The tone of the early Urdu drama was not only low but the plays were inartistic and utterly unpolished. Ghastly murders were perpetrated on the stage with all the equipment of gibbet and mask. Comic interludes and farces were but burlesques of a low order. And as for the higher qualities of dramatic art, refinement in thought and delicacy of expression, restraint and economy of speech and action, gradual development of the plot and its *denouement* these were sadly lacking in most of these plays. The love and passion depicted is of low kind. There is nothing of spiritualised, etherialised, sublimated love. It is sensual and carnal leading to vice and crime.

The effect of English drama and stage.

With the passage of time English dramas attracted much attention. They were dressed up for Hindustani stage. Shakespeare's plays were the most popular and nearly all of them were rendered into Urdu for the stage. They are merely adaptations with no merits of the original. So great was the popularity that as many as four or five adaptations were made by various persons of one play. Most of these plays are noticed in the India Office Library Catalogue. The names were changed and often the characters were misunderstood. The atmosphere is thoroughly oriental. Hamlet's soliloquy and his character is entirely transformed as the translator was not learned enough to enter into the spirit of the original. Says Mr. Abdulla Yusuf Ali, "The influence of English stage is visible in the scene painting, mechanical devices on the stage, the structure of the stage and in the general get-up of the thing. The slavish imitation of English popular plays affected Urdu drama in two directions. First, the free and easy and questionable tone of the English problem play which took a mischievous delight in holding up to ridicule and thus undermining old ideals of society in morals, customs and manners made the moral tone of the Urdu drama in its infancy extremely lax and in this respect it may be said with much force that English drama has had the same effect on Indian drama as Italian drama had on French drama and French drama on Restoration drama in England. And secondly,

the tunes of European music were introduced on the Indian stage in a most clumsy manner and a novel versification was created in Urdu by poetasters to be sung in these tunes. The effect is most ludicrous. It is like stretching Urdu verse on the procrustean bed of English tune and torturing the words to make nonsense of them." Mr. Kunwer Sen too has overrated the influence of English problem plays. The low tone and the ridicule of noble ideals is not exclusively due to the foreign influence but also to the infancy of the Urdu drama, the character of the actors, the want of scholarship of the play-wrights, the character of the audience who want a new play everyday, the low income from the houses, the desire to amuse and evoke laughter from the shilling gallery and the general state of society. English drama with its new phase of problem plays has not yet affected Urdu drama to any appreciable extent. The second charge carries much truth. The catchy tunes and the free and easy rag-time music of the stage has become very popular and has proved detrimental to the real scientific music of India.

Post Victorian Urdu drama (1900 A. D.)

A distinct and well marked change is noticeable in the dramas of this period. Urdu drama has advanced rapidly. It was being influenced by the indigenous dramas, by European dramas and contemporary Indian dramas. Sanskrit plays, plays of the old and modern English and French dramatists, Bengali and Marathi plays were exercising influence on the budding Urdu drama in a greater or lesser degree. Babu Harishchandra of Benares called Bharatendu wrote many exceedingly fine Hindi plays. He was well versed on Sanskrit literature and thoroughly saturated with the beauties of immortal Kalidass and Bhavabhuti. He took his plots mostly from the Puranas an inexhaustible storehouse of myth and fable, tradition and history and it is now acknowledged that he wove the webs of his plots with wonderful grace and felicity and consummate skill. As his language is pure Hindi his works need not be considered. His dramatic works however exercised considerable influence and have served as models and in some cases as sources of later Urdu dramas, for example *Raja Harishchandra*, *Rukamani Mangal* and *Billo Mangal*. The range of Urdu drama has been considerably extended. The Puranas, the European plays, the Bengali, Marathi and Gujrati plays, stories from Indian and Persian mythologies which would interest the theatre-going public and episodes of Indian history ancient and modern are all laid under contribution. New ground is broken. There are social dramas holding up to ridicule the foibles of the society. Politics and science have not been spared and their domains are invaded. There is a distinct improvement in the quality and tone of the dramas. The love depicted is of a higher order. The emotions have a clever representation on the

stage. More attention is now paid to the psychology of mind and the motives underlying the acts. There is a greater variety of subjects and the sphere of the drama is ever widening. The treatment of the subject is also artistic. There is a distinct advance in dramatic craftmanship. There is a finer delineation of character. The plot is more skilfully handled and situations are more cleverly conceived. There is more of restraint and less of abandon. There is refinement of thought and delicacy of expression. The appeal of the plays is also powerful. There is less of horse-play, boisterous buffoonery and indecent exhibitions repugnant to Indian tastes and standards. The speeches of tragedies are mostly ranting declamations and frothy harangues full of bombast and extravagant passion. Sometimes the pitch is not in keeping with the situation. Too much indulgence in poetry spoils the dramatic effect. Rhyming prose should not be so much indulged in. Sanskritised words should not indiscriminately be used in juxtaposition with Persian words. They produce an incongruous effect and are often ludicrous. Too much use of unfamiliar bilingualism should be avoided. No laboured attempt should be made to explain to the audience the same thought and sentiment in various phrases belonging to Hindi and Urdu. On the whole the plays of this period are more artistic in treatment and moral in tone.

Defects to be avoided.

The defects have also been lightly touched above. They need to be removed. Extravagances in thought and language have to be checked. Less of rant, more of sense, less of stiffness and formality, more of real life and genuineness is needed. Rhyming prose though helpful to memory should be discarded as far as possible in favour of easy simple flowing crisp prose. Greater skill should be displayed in the management of the plot. There should be no boisterous foolery but real refined humour. Language should carefully be looked into. The touch of the play-wrights is not very certain and their grasp is rather feeble. Its development to the fullest extent is only possible when scholars whose bent of mind is essentially dramatic take to play-writing. There should be a subtler characterization, a finer treatment of subjects, chastened humour and a wider knowledge of plot architecture a greater command over the language and a pointed graphic style.

The salvation of Urdu drama lies in widening of its field and the enriching of its coffers. Translations of best European dramas and English masterpieces should be made. They may be made either for stage or for literature. The Sanskrit masterpieces should be unearthed and translated in their proper spirit. Urdu play-wrights must know the nature and ideals of true drama. Let

them see what advance has been made by the dramatic literatures of the leading countries of the world. Let them adopt what is suited to the genius of Urdu literature and Indian society. Let not the translations swamp original compositions. Comedies of manners may be written. Society should furnish subjects for artistic treatment. The scholar must not despise drama and dramatic literature. The general tone of the drama must improve. Actors should not be looked down upon. A greater enterprising spirit is required. A wider patronage is solicited. Unfortunately the institution of the *purdah* impedes the progress of Urdu novels and drama. No healthy and romantic love is wholly possible where there is no freedom of intercourse between mait and man. A man should not be deemed to have lost caste if he has taken to the stage as a profession. The present plays are inordinately long. They should be kept well within bounds. The dramatists must have a very high sense of their avocation.

Achievements of Urdu drama.

Drama is an important branch of literature which cannot be ignored. Urdu drama thus supplies a long felt want and removed a defect found so long in Urdu literature. It is the training ground of language where it is exercised and strengthened. Urdu drama also served to popularise Urdu throughout the length and breadth of India and helped to make Urdu the *lingua franca* of India. The Urdu dramatic literature has a value of its own and with the passage of time it will develop and become more rich and important.

Future of Urdu drama.

Prophets are never popular and their prophesies are laughed at. Nevertheless Urdu drama has a bright future before it. It has made wonderfully good progress considering its age. "Already Urdu drama has shown sign of vigorous growth and development. Men of light and leading will surely recognise in it a powerful instrument for the uplift of the people and the next wave of dramatic composition is likely to be historico-political even as it has been in Persia one of the most backward countries from the dramatic standpoint. Historical drama like those of Shakespeare are yet to be written in India. Through and after these perhaps will in course of time arise the true romantic drama. Then and only then will Urdu drama take its rightful place by the side of the best productions of the world."

CHAPTER XIX.

PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF URDU LITERATURE

Scope of the Chapter.

A detailed survey of the whole field of Urdu Literature has been made. The chapter will mainly be devoted to the consideration of Urdu as a language and the position of the Urdu literature amongst the vernacular literatures of the country and is largely based on the learned article of M. Abdul Majid published in the *Modern Review.*

Urdu as a language of elegance, sweetness and expressiveness.

Urdu, as a language, by common consent has a great reputation for elegance, sweetness and expressiveness. It is the language of culture and refinement and capable of expressing delicate shades of sensation and thought. "Urdu having incorporated with it the quintessence of several cultures Sanskrit, Zend, Greek, Scythian, Arabic, Turkish, and Persian, is more fitted as a medium of instruction, better equipped as a vehicle of literary expression and more suited to the needs and requirements of civilization than the less fortunate vernaculars of the land."

Urdu, the symbol of the Hindu-Muslim *entente*.

In these days of nation-building, the importance of Urdu, the symbol of Hindu-Muslim *entente* can never be overrated. It is the pledge of their unity. "It was the genuine spirit of unity and self-sacrifice that induced both Hindus and Muslims to forego their respective languages and to adopt as their own a language essentially Indian in origin but fully nourished and developed on foreign resources. Urdu was the practical outcome of this spirit of mutual cordiality and is still faithfully reflecting the spirit."

Urdu, the true *lingua franca* of India.

Urdu is truly the *lingua franca* of India for it is understood all over India even where it is not spoken. "Marathi in Kashmir, Gujrati in Behar, and Tamil in Sindh would sound quite as foreign as Bantu : while, Hindustani as every one can testify by his own experience, can be understood throughout the length and breadth of India, in the remotest parts of the country —nay even beyond it, in such places as Aden, Port Said and Malta. Other Indian vernaculars, one may be pardoned for holding and without meaning any disparagement to them, are at least provincial : Hindustani alone is inter-provincial. A very considerable portion of Hindustani is common to all the Indian vernaculars,

and it is therefore that even the people of these provinces, where Hindustani is not habitually used, do not find it absolutely foreign.'

The universality and cosmopolitan character of Urdu.

Urdu is extremely rich and boasts of an enormous vocabulary. "Derivatives of Iranian, Greek, Persian, Turkish, Arabic, Portuguese and lately of English also are found in it overflowing numbers intermingled with words of Sanskrit and indigenous origins. This greatly facilitates the work of coining new technical terms. The Urdu writer on modern Western Sciences can with perfect ease draw upon the vast resources of Arabic and Sanskrit, Persian and English, of course with due regard to the proprieties of adoption and in consonance with the genius of his own language." Unfortunately the tendency is to draw exclusively from Arabic without balancing the merits of equivalents from other languages which has cast an odium on Urdu and made it unpopular.

Testimony of some European scholars about the linguistic adequacy and merits of Urdu.

J. Beams the author of 'Indian Philology' gives the following verdict:—"I consider Urdu as the most progressive and civilized form of the great and widespread language of the 'hordes'. Not only is it compendious, eloquent, expressive, and copious but it is the only form in which the legitimate development of the speech of the Gangetic tribes could show itself." (Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society, Volume 35, 1866, Page 1).

M. Garcin De Tassy, the renowned French scholar, has the following remarks to offer :—

"Urdu has taken throughout India the same position as French has done in Europe; it is a language most in use; it is employed both at the court and in the city; literary men compose their works in it, and musical writers their songs and it is a medium of conversation with Europeans." It is said that Urdu is not everywhere understood by the Hindu population, but this is the case with all the languages in general use in a country; thus the Briton peasants, whether the Provincials or Alsatians do not understand French, but should this be a reason for ceasing to employ it at the Law Courts and the Government Offices of the Provinces."

George Campbell, the author of "India As It Might Be", observes :—

"I would propose that in all the High Schools Hindustani should be the common language, the vernacular languages also being used so far as necessary. It is almost impossible to get on well without some common medium; and if, as I believe, the

idea of making English general is out of the question, it must be a great object to render Hindustani as common as possible." Hindustani being as I have said a *lingua franca* throughout India, is common to all the higher and I may say to all the ambulatory classes (Sepoy, servants, etc.), to all Mohammadans, to all European residents and it has a peculiar principle of adaptation to a degree far beyond any other language of which I have ever heard. If a word cannot be easily and exactly translated into Hindustani, no periphrasis is attempted,—it is at once adopted be it Persian, Arabic, Portuguese or English and it is wonderful how convenient and useful the practice is. We can use Hindustani for anything.

Vincent A. Smith writes in the last Chapter of his *History of India* : " The Urdu language which resembles English in simplicity and flexibility of its syntax and in the extraordinary wealth of its vocabulary drawn from Western Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, English and other sources should be capable of expressing ideas on any subject, literary, philosophical and scientific."

The alleged poverty of the Urdu literature.

It is commonly believed that Urdu does not possess any literature worth the name and that it has no history to be written. European scholars have paid scant attention and Indians even less. Many have found it of no great value and they think that it pales into insignificance when compared with the classical and modern advanced Western literatures. Two considerations may be urged. Urdu, as a literary language is of recent growth and it cannot be expected to accumulate the rich stores as are garnered by old languages. Its literary life, undwarfed by Persian, has been of short duration. It is a language of great promise and it bids fair to possess a rich literature of its own which would compare favourably with any literature. Even now it can hold its own against the modern vernaculars of India.

Classifications.

Literature can broadly be classified under two broad heads—original works and translations. Translations are mostly from European languages mainly English, Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, and modern vernaculars of India notably Hindi, Bengali, Mahratti, and Gujrati. Amongst the original works are included poetry, prose, fiction, and drama.

Creative work—poetry, prose, fiction and drama.

With all its limitations and defects Urdu poetry has a charm, fascination and a variety of its own. " The poetry is very varied and of great interest. It includes moral verses and counsels, sometimes in intermingled verse and prose ; heroic poems telling the old tales of the loves of Khusru and Shirin, of Yusuf and Zulikha, of Majnun and Lailah and the romances of chivalry ; elegies on the deaths of Hasan and Hussain and of various

monarchs ; devotional poems in the praise of Mohammad and the Imams, eulogies of the reigning ruler or other patron or protector of the poor ; satires upon men and institutions and sometimes upon Nature herself, especially such phenomena as heat, cold, inundations and pestilence ; descriptive verse relating to the seasons and months, the flowers and the trees. Above all there is a great wealth of love poetry, both secular and mystic, wherein impassioned ghazals or odes, the union of men with God is celebrated under various allegories, as the bees and the lotus, the nightingale and the rose, the moth and the flame" The names of Mir, Dard, Sauda, Ghalib, Zafar, Zauq, Anis, Dabir, Atish, Amir, Dagh, Hali, Iqbal, Hasrat and Akbar and of others can be mentioned with pride and are some of the greatest in the bead roll of the Urdu poetry. Their works should be read and studied in the spirit in which they are written for every literature has a genius of its own and calls for a taste to appreciate it. The cream of Urdu poetry has been published by Mohammad Elyas Burny of Osmania University, Hyderabad, in his Selected Urdu Poems Series which is divided into three sets and covers twelve volumes. The series are *Maarif-i-Millat* (Problems of Community). *Jazbat-i-Fitrat* (Natural Feelings and Emotions) and *Manazir-i-Qudrat* (The Scenes and Sights of Nature). In this comprehensive anthology the compiler aims at the culled comparative study of cognate poems in Urdu. The poems are culled from the works of old and new poets and treat of a large variety of subjects and are arranged according to the affinity of their subject-matter. The poems of modern poets published in the various magazines have been included in the collection. On the whole it is an admirable series and the compiler would do a service to the Urdu literature to supplement and enlarge it by incorporating other pieces.

The prose-writers are many and some are of outstanding merits; Rajjab Ali Beg Saroor, Ghalib, Sir Syed, Nazir Ahmad, Shibli, Azad, Zakaullah, Hali, Syed Sulaiman, the band of writers in Fort William College at Calcutta and the present-day writers have merits of their own. Azad and Shibli stand out foremost. In fiction the works of Sarshar, Sharar Ruswa, Rashid-ul-Khair and Prem Chand require only to be read to be immensely admired.

Translations from occidental and oriental literatures.

On the reproduction side the Urdu literature is extremely rich and varied. "In poetry and drama most of the world classics have found their way into Urdu, Homer's *Iliad*; the *Mahabharat* ; the *Ramayan* by Valmiki and also by Tulsidas Kalidas's *Sakuntala*, *Meghaduta*, *Vikramo Urvashi*, *Ritusinghar* and other works ; Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Tagore's *Gitanjali*,

Chitra Gardener and other works are easily accessible to the Urdu knowing public. Shakespeare is perhaps the most popular and his many plays have variously been translated. Some of Sheridan's plays like *Pizaro* and selected poems of Sophocles and Sapho, Dante and Goethe, Longfellow and Southey, Shelley and Byron, Wordsworth and Tennyson, have also been rendered into Urdu."

"In fiction next to Reynolds, Scott, Marie Corelie and Conan Doyle are the most favourite Almost the complete works of Bankim Chandra Chatterji and most of Tagore's tales have been rendered into Urdu. Latterly R. L. Stevenson, Sir Rider Haggard, Oscar Wilde, Bernard Shaw, and H. G. Well have begun to come in favour." Oftentimes English works are adapted or translated without acknowledgments.

"Amongst general prose-writers the Urdu-speaking public have found their favourites in Macaulay, Carlyle, Smiles, and Lubbock."

"In region of philosophy and psychology, Urdu possesses several dialogues of Plato, selections from Aristotle, Chanakya's maxims, Seneca's Reflections, Berkeley's Principles and Dialogues, Lee's the Crowd, the Psychology of the Great War and the Psychology of the Evolution of the peoples, and portions of the works of Bacon, Hume, Kant, Mill, Spencer, James and Stout."

"In general history and biography, the names of Plutarch's lives of eminent Greeks and Romans, Rollin's 'Greece', Bury's, 'History of Greece', Dozy's 'Islamic Spain', Wallace's 'Russia', Abbot's 'Napoleon', Green's 'History of the English People', Vincent Smith's 'Ancient India', Elphinstone's 'History of India', Malcolm's 'History of Persia' and portions of Gibbon's 'Roman Empire' may be mentioned as illustrative of many others of equal weight and authority."

"In the domain of politics and economics the following typical names should suffice:—Aristotle's 'Politics'; Mill's 'Liberty'; 'Representative Government and Political Economy'; Bell's 'Laws of Wealth'; Morley's 'Machiavelli'; and 'Reminiscences'; Curzon's 'Persia'; Mazzini's 'Duties of Man'; Schuster's 'Strangling of Persia'; Blunt's 'Future of Islam' and portions of Seely and Bluntschelli, Wilson and Pollack, Sidgwick and Jevons, Marshall and Morrison."

"Allied to the Political Sciences the department of philosophical history and in this department may be named the translations of Guizot's 'History of Civilization', Buckle's 'Civilization in England', Le Bon's 'Civilization of the Arabs' and 'Civilization of Hindustan'; Lecky's 'European Morals', Draper's 'Intellectual Development of Europe' and Dutt's 'Ancient Indian Civilization'."

" In education besides several manuals like Todd's, Urdu is not unfamiliar with the works of Spencer, Bain or Froebel, Pestalotzi, Herbert and Montessori."

" In Science, in addition to numerous popular treatises of general character like Draper's Conflict between Religion and Science, the Urdu-speaking public is fairly well acquainted with the works and researches of Darwin and Wallace Hecckel and Huxley and Lyall and Geikie, Tyndal and Bose, Kelvin and Maxwell, Crooke and Lodge."

" To allude to the translations of standard works on Law, Jurisprudence and Medicine is superfluous, since quite a large number of them have as a matter of necessity found their way into Urdu."

"The Arabic and Persian stock of Muslim literature almost entirely and the sacred Sanskrit and Hindi literature of the Hindus, to a large extent, have been reproduced in Urdu. The *Quran*, the *Gita*, the *Puranas*, the *Mahabharat*, and the *Ramayana* have each of them several translations in this language. The lives and teachings of the Prophet, of Jesus Christ, of Shri Krishna, of Shri Ram Chandra, of Gautama Buddha, of Guru Nanak, and of Kabir, as also the works of Hindu divines and *yogis* like Vashisht, of saints and mystical poets like Maulana Rum and Hafiz; of ethicists and theologians, like Sadi and Ghazali; of epic poets like Firdousi, of philosophers like Avicenna, of historians like Ibn Khallikan and Farishta are some of the best gems in the treasury of Urdu literature."

The above lists are illustrative only and not exhaustive in any sense. The works are mentioned at random without any attempt at complete enumeration which would require hundreds of pages. A large number of these publications belong to the Osmania University and solid work is being done there and at Azamgarh.

Institutions for the promotion of the Urdu literature.

Numerous institutions have been started during recent years, with the diffusion of Urdu literature as their primary object. The three largest of them are the Osmania University, with its Translation Bureau; Anjuman-i-Taraqqi-i-Urdu with its Headquarters at Aurangabad (Deccan) and Darul Musannafin at Azamgarh. Their activities have been chronicled in an appropriate place and may not be reiterated here. Many minor societies in Delhi, Lucknow and Lahore are doing useful work in scattering Urdu works broadcast.

The Hindustani Academy, 1927.

The Goverment of the United Provinces being encouraged by the interest shown by the Legislative Council have established a Hindustani Academy to stimulate the development of Urdu and Hindi Literatures. Some of the functions of the Academy will be :—

(1) " The award of prizes (by a system of competition) for the production of the best books on particular subjects.

(2) The translations of books into Urdu and Hindi by paid translators and the publication of the translations by the Academy.

(3) The encouragement of the production of the original works or translations in Hindi and Urdu, whether by grants to Universities and literary associations or otherwise.

(4) The election of eminent writers to Fellowship of the Academy.

The present constitution of the Academy is a Council and an Executive Committee but the control will ultimately be vested in the Fellows elected to the Academy by the Council. The Council consists of a President, six ex-officio members and thirty members (including a General Secretary) nominated by the Government. The Government has generously placed Rs. 25,000 at the disposal of the Academy. The Government has appointed Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, K.C.S.I., to be President and Dr. Tara Chand, Ph. D., as its General Secretary.

The Academy is largely due to the sympathy of His Excellency the Governor of the United Provinces, Sir William Marris, who is himself a renowned scholar and the vision and exertions of the cultured minister Hon'ble Rai Rajeshwar Bali and M. Daya Narain Nigam, who worked indefatigably for the fruition of the scheme. With the distinguished President and able Secretary and keen members and with the blessing of the Government the Academy has a brilliant future and a glorious destiny.

Urdu script.

Attempts are also being made at Hyderabad and Aurangabad to regularise and simplify the script and adopt it to Urdu. Some committees have been convened and proposals advanced to this end. The script is said to be cumbrous, difficult, puzzling, to the learner, and liable to misreading and misspelling. Some of the alleged defects are due to misapprehension. The defective and objectionable features have received careful attention and are sure to be removed in course of time.

INDEX

A

B

C